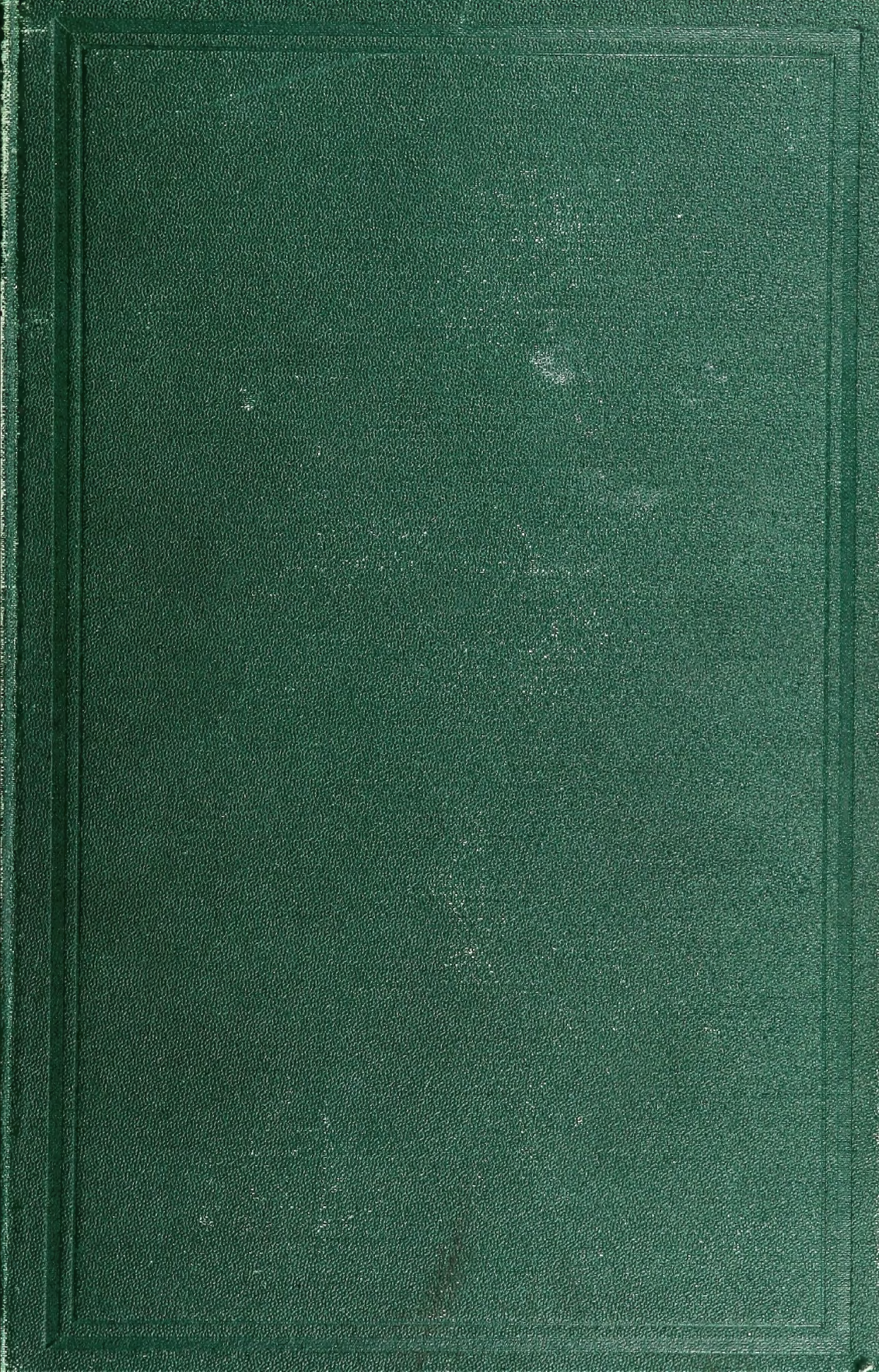
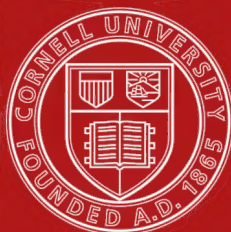






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THE LIFE
OF
TIMOTHY PICKERING.
VOL. II.



Rebecca Pickens
wife of J. Pickens

THE LIFE
OF
TIMOTHY PICKERING.

BY
CHARLES W. UPHAM.
entworth

Pickering, Octavius

VOLUME II.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.

1873.

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PREFACE
TO
CONTINUATION OF THE LIFE
OF
TIMOTHY PICKERING.

FROM early life Colonel Pickering was in the habit of preserving letters, accounts, and documents of all sorts, that came into his hands. After his death, his sons selected, at different times, what were deemed most valuable, arranged and caused them to be bound in volumes, with indexes to each. These volumes, above sixty in number, are in the permanent custody, and by the direction of Octavius Pickering have become the property, of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Five volumes are reserved by the family.

Only a small portion of these materials, such as have been requisite for the purposes of a biography, has been used in this work. The residue is of great value, and will well reward the researches of students of American history,—shedding light upon the period of the Revolution, and the operations of the government and experience of the country for the subsequent half century.

Copies of his own letters, and other productions of his pen, were carefully made by Colonel Pickering, and are found among his papers. While in the cabinet, espe-

cially when Secretary of State, he was under the necessity, from the pressure of business, of using a copying-machine. Unfortunately many of these copies have become more or less illegible. They are the only record of interesting and important information, illustrating the most critical and momentous emergencies in the public affairs of the country, particularly in its foreign relations; and care ought to be taken to put into an enduring form so much of them as can be recovered and made out by persons expert in deciphering such faded documents.

These bound volumes do not contain half of Colonel Pickering's manuscripts. There were chests filled with packages of unarranged materials, innumerable accounts and vouchers, personal and domestic, and also growing out of his business as Quartermaster-General of the Revolutionary army, and papers in reference to farming operations, and agricultural subjects generally. Those relating to agriculture have been deposited with the Essex Agricultural Society, of which he was the founder and first President. Some of a local interest, with duplicates of matter in the bound volumes, have been placed in the hands of the President of the Essex Institute, and the remainder passed back to the family.

In order to become fully possessed of the elements of the subject, before entering upon a continuation and the completion of the life and character of Timothy Pickering, an examination, with careful scrutiny, of this mass of materials, bound and unbound, has been regarded as necessary.

Mr. Octavius Pickering, in dictating the items of a will, on the last night of his life, caused to be inserted in it, that I should be asked to complete the Biography

of his father, of which he had published one volume. The request of a friend so highly esteemed, under the circumstances, of course had very great weight. Further, his father and mine were class-mates and room-mates in college, and their friendship lasted through life.

Colonel Pickering was my parishioner. I was at the side of his death-bed ; with his family and descendants I have enjoyed a friendly and affectionate intimacy. But chief among the motives that constrained me to undertake the task, was the fact that statements and anecdotes of much importance to his Biography, and heard from his own lips, now that his children and other associates of his later years are all gone, exist only in my memory.

In looking back over the long line of his public life, Colonel Pickering attached peculiar importance to his Indian service, his estimate of which was continually heightened by reflection and observation. It has been felt to be the duty of his biographer to make a particularly full presentation of this subject. The intervening experiences of the country, and the difficulties that at present embarrass and perplex the government in its relations with aboriginal tribes, will probably lead to a general conviction that Colonel Pickering's policy was wise as well as humane.

A large space has been given to domestic history, and to details of agricultural operations and affairs. This was regarded as indispensable and imperative in portraying the character of a man who, in all elevated spheres of public life, military and civil, ever remembered that the position of head of a family was the most responsible and sacred a citizen can occupy, and found more

enjoyment in rural scenes and labors than in the highest official stations. He adorned the posts of Senator, chief of departments, and Minister of State ; but the titles he considered the most honorable, and cherished with most pride, were Father and Farmer.

The extensive use in these volumes of letters and documents written at the time by him and his correspondents is designed to impart to the work the authority, and, it is hoped, has given it the interest, of an autobiography. The person particularly presented, his eminent compatriots, and all his fellow-actors, are thus made to pass over the stage of life again before the eyes of the reader.

C. W. U.

SALEM, 1873.

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LIFE

OF

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

CHAPTER I.

Colonel Pickering's Service in the Revolutionary War

1775-1783.

BEFORE taking up, in continuation, the life of Colonel Pickering, and entering upon the subsequent stages of his career, it may be well to present a retrospective view of the part he acted in the struggle that severed the Colonies of Great Britain in North America from that empire. His military life is wholly covered in the preceding volume, and it may as well be reviewed at this point as at the end of his biography.

The war, resulting in the Independence of the United States, is generally considered as beginning on the 19th of April, 1775, the date of the battle of Lexington, and ending on the 19th of April, 1783, when the Proclamation of Congress, announcing the cessation of hostilities, was read by order of Washington, at his head-quarters in Newburgh, — a period of precisely eight years. Colonel Pickering's connection with it covered, however, a longer period. Soon after finishing his collegiate course at Harvard University, in 1763, while pursuing legal studies, and writing, as he could find leisure, in the offices

of the Registry of Deeds in the County of Essex, and Town Clerk of Salem, he turned his attention with great earnestness to military matters, and commenced a series of active measures to prepare the people of his town and its neighborhood to defend their rights, if occasion should require, in arms. His proceedings to this end seem to make it quite certain that he discerned the shadows which coming events cast before. In January, 1766, when not twenty-one years of age, he was commissioned, by the Governor of the Province, as Lieutenant of a company of foot, in the First Regiment of the militia in the County of Essex; in May, 1769, was Captain of the same; and, on the 13th of February, 1775, was elected Colonel of the regiment, receiving his commission from the Royal Governor; which, like all commissions from that source and under that authority, having been made void by an act of the General Court of Massachusetts, was renewed on the 14th of February, 1776, by the "Council of the Massachusetts Bay." In 1771, besides the care of his own company at home, he went at stated days of each week to Marblehead to drill, and instruct in infantry exercise, as many as could be gathered there. All the while his pen was employed in laboring to diffuse a military spirit among the people. Articles to that purpose were inserted in the newspapers, and his studies were directed to bringing the militia to greater efficiency, placing it on a reformed basis, correcting irregularities in its usages, and impressing the importance of its acquiring a systematic organization, and strict habits of order and discipline. As early, indeed, as 1769 he published in the "Essex Gazette" suggestions as to the formation of military companies.

By such active exertions, and the boldness and decisiveness of his course in the political discussions by which the public mind was rapidly becoming more and more agitated, he soon was felt and acknowledged by his immediate fellow-citizens as the head of the popular movement. The energy of his character, and even then his universally recognized integrity of principle and purity of purpose, made all men look to him for counsel and direction. He was chairman of political committees, and the master spirit in all the proceedings of that critical period in his town and county. The following correspondence shows, in its *confidential* character, that those of his fellow-citizens who favored the Royalist side in the approaching contest regarded him as the person to be addressed, as the representative and head of the party opposed to them. It illustrates the efficiency and thoroughness of the measures adopted by the patriotic leaders to ascertain and develop the military resources of the people ; and also the courteous and kindly spirit of Colonel Pickering in his intercourse with persons of supposed Tory proclivities.

Andrew Oliver, a son of the Secretary and Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, was a resident of Salem, for many years one of its representatives to the General Court, a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and, as political divisions became decisive, appointed a Mandamus Councillor. He was classed with the opponents of the popular cause, and considered as sympathizing with his father and family generally.

“SALEM, March 4th, 1775.

“SIR,

“As I have ever made it my study to avoid giving offence, either to my country or fellow-townsmen ; to the latter of

which I am not forgetful of the obligations I am under for the honor they have done me in the repeated instances of their good-will and confidence in times past, I would beg the favor of you, Sir, (in confidence) to inform me whether my personal appearance, on Tuesday next, will be expected, as, if the weather should prove unfavorable, it would be at the risk of a fit of the gout, which I have happily escaped this season hitherto. My military accoutrements, according to the requisition published in the 'Essex Gazette,' will be ready for inspection either at home or upon the place of parade if necessary. These are now, and ever have been, ready for use in the service of my native country, and for the support and vindication of the constitutional rights, liberties, and privileges of British Americans.

"I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"A. OLIVER.

"COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING."

"SALEM, March 13th, 1775.

"SIR,

"Your townsmen are not forgetful of your amiable and worthy conduct in times past, particularly in renouncing that unconstitutional and justly odious office of a Mandamus Councillor under an act of Parliament, which would overturn the long-established, salutary, and happy government of the Province, and lay a foundation for complete slavery,—a renunciation which took place as soon as the importunity of friends gave a moment's time for reflection. I am persuaded, Sir, you still enjoy the 'good-will and confidence' of your fellow-citizens, and I doubt not you will continue to deserve it.

"Your personal appearance, Sir, to-morrow, will *not* be expected. It rather gives me pain to have you call the notification for the muster, with army accoutrements, a 'Requisition.' I know some have represented it as such, and gone so far as lyingly to say that all who did not prepare and appear were immediately to be attacked and abused; but nothing was farther from the intention of the officers. The inhabitants, in general, had remained listless and inactive with respect to their military preparations, and it was thought

necessary to notify a muster in the terms made use of as a spur to quicken them to do what they, in general, were saying ought to be done, but which, like a reformation of manners, they left undone.

“ I am, Sir, with great regard, your humble servant,

“ T. PICKERING, JR.

“ P. S. You will have no objection to some officers of the ward in which you live, waiting upon you to note down the particulars of your arms and accoutrements, that so our return to the Congress may be as large and complete as possible.”

In all his efforts to prepare the people to meet the issue of the pending political controversy, if it should come to a conflict in arms with the power of the mother country, Colonel Pickering, while holding a subordinate commission in his regiment, was embarrassed by the circumstance that its Colonel was a Tory, a person of great influence and respectability, and the representative of a family which for many generations had been the wealthiest in that part of the country. Of course no countenance or consent could be obtained from him in attempts to prepare the people for a military struggle; and a character of irregularity, if not of illegality, was given to such attempts when made by officers of inferior rank, without his sanction, and against his wishes and views. To put the organization of his regiment into public and long-continued action without his approval—for Captains of companies to be drilling and parading them before the eyes of their Colonel, in disregard of his authority, under his frowns, and in pursuance of a purpose he was known to abhor—had the appearance, at least, of a mutinous course of procedure. This feeling paralyzed, more or less, the action of many, and particularly in the country towns, and was

so considerable an obstacle in the way of the general military training and preparation of the people, that it was necessary to take some special steps to remove it.

The following letter, apparently addressed to officers of the regiment in other towns than Salem, and probably signed by the Captains of the four Salem companies, is found in a rough-draft among Colonel Pickering's manuscripts. It is in his handwriting. Having therein explained and justified their course, the Captains of the Salem companies continued to gather their men for frequent and systematic instruction, without taking any notice of their Colonel; and the difficulty was, before long, removed by the course of events, necessitating his supersedure, on the 13th of February, 1775, as has been stated. "Captain Timothy Pickering, Jr.," was elected Colonel of the regiment in his place.

"SALEM, December 26th, 1774.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Being elected to command the companies of militia in this town, we have met to consider and resolve on such measures as appear practicable for disciplining them. Now the greater part of us being wholly unacquainted with them, it is first of all necessary that we should instruct ourselves in military exercises. This we have resolved to do forthwith; and we shall endeavor to procure as many as we can to associate with us for the same purpose. While we are thus applying ourselves to the business, we shall cause the men in each company to be taught, and give all the encouragement in our power to induce them to attend their teachers. Such are the circumstances of the town we are of opinion that it will be impracticable for us to proceed otherwise at present.

"We hope the necessity we are under of acting in this manner will prove no discouragement to the rest of the regiment; nor would we, by any means, be a bar to their pro-

ceeding to fulfil, in every particular, the Resolves of the Provincial Congress. We are, Gentlemen, your friends and humble servants. By direction of the new elected officers of the four militia companies in Salem."

This early period of Colonel Pickering's life exhibits an activity and versatility of powers quite extraordinary. Besides the clerical and professional engagements that must have demanded much of his time, he was a very frequent contributor to the local press, not only in reference to military matters, but on other subjects that engaged the interests of the community. A protracted parish controversy and a vehement discussion arising out of the establishment in Salem of a small-pox hospital, drew from his pen numerous articles, filling columns in the newspapers, displaying the traits of precision, earnestness, warmth, and energy, which subsequently distinguished his productions in high public and diplomatic spheres. In all movements and meetings, in these and other miscellaneous affairs, his presence and co-operation were never wanting. He was deeply interested in music, particularly psalmody, and was a leader and teacher of the choir in his own place of worship. It is a circumstance characteristic of the times, as well as of the man, that, on his visits to Marblehead to instruct the people in the military art, he stayed there after the drill was over to teach and lead a class in sacred music. When to all this was added the constant care he gave to his own military company, calling them to frequent meetings for exercise in the manual, marchings, and musket practice, it would seem that his days and evenings must have been wholly engrossed, and no time left unoccupied. But it was not so. He found,

or made, intervals amidst his multifarious engagements, which were devoted to a special study, and resulted in an elaborate work. It probably engaged all his available hours for several years prior to the Revolution. In 1775 he published a volume of one hundred and eighty compact and well-filled pages of letter-press, to which are appended fourteen pages of engraved copperplate illustrations. It was printed with creditable carefulness and accuracy, and published in Boston, by S. Hall, and is, in all respects, a literary and historical curiosity. The title is, "An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia ; by Timothy Pickering, Jr." The author had evidently explored all sources of information, and studied works published in England and Europe on the subject. That style of simplicity, plainness, purity, and conciseness, which is the last result of culture and practice by the best writers, pervades the book. The details and minutiae belonging to the subject are so expressed as to be perfectly clear and intelligible. In this respect it is a model performance. Beginning with rudimental definitions and descriptions of the exercise and training of a single soldier, descending to the smallest particular, as to attitude and posture, the movements of the feet and limbs, carriage of the body, and handling of the gun, it lays down all the rules for a section, file, division or platoon, company, battalion, or regiment. As a guide or handbook it has the appearance of completeness ; while, as a directory, the numerous engravings provide all that is needed. As a manual of instruction in military drill, it probably will stand comparison creditably with more modern works, and is, at any rate, well worthy of being studied by all who may be led to treat of the subject.

In the preface to the work he acknowledges that it is the production of "a mere militia-man, of one who was not formed on the parade, or seen any service," and who only claimed to have been "somewhat used to fire-arms," to have "had a little experience in the militia," and to be "in some degree acquainted with the difficulties in training up the men to military knowledge," in the short time that citizen soldiers can give to the subject.

In apology for some features of the work, in which he departs from previous treatises on the subject, he says "custom and prejudice are the foundation of many practices among the military. Maxims have been blindly adopted without any examination of the principles on which they are founded." "If we attend to any other arts, the same absurdities will appear. Many customs are followed, and laws observed, when their origin is unknown, and their reason has ceased to exist." In this connection he adduces an illustration which has been singularly repeated in our day. "It seems that the Prussians were the first who, in the present century, ventured to depart from the old-established form of exercise; and their amazing victories under their present King having astonished all Europe, every nation was emulous to imitate that discipline by which such wonders were performed." He then mentions the principal reforms in the English service, thus instigated by the example of Prussia, and proceeds to point out various particulars in which still further reformation is needed, and which it is the design of his book to introduce. The preface concludes as follows: "I have endeavored to explain every part of the exercise minutely, and with the utmost clearness and certainty of expression. Some

indeed may think me in many cases too triflingly particular, but I have inserted nothing but what, when the military art was entirely new to me, would have been very acceptable, and have saved me much time and study. If the work, such as it is, shall facilitate, to the officers and others in the militia, the getting an acquaintance with the military art, and so prove beneficial to my country, I shall obtain my highest wish."

Following the title, in the second edition, is this copy of record : —

" MASSACHUSETTS BAY IN COUNCIL, May 1st, 1776.

" Whereas, the Plan of Military Discipline, lately published by Timothy Pickering, Esq., appears to this Court to be well adapted to the use and practice of a militia, as it contains all the motions in the manual exercise that are necessary and useful, and is not, like the 64th Norfolk and others, clogged with many superfluous motions, which only serve to burden the memory and perplex the learner ; and it also contains many useful manœuvres, &c., not published in the 64th. Therefore,

" It is resolved, That the aforesaid Plan of Exercise, published by Timothy Pickering, Esq., shall for the future be used and practised by the militia of this colony : and all officers thereof are hereby directed and enjoined to use the same ; and to instruct and exercise the soldiers under their command respectively, agreeable to the said plan, in all their public trainings and musters accordingly.

" Sent down for concurrence. JOHN LOWELL, Deputy Secretary, *pro tem.*

" In the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, read and concurred. SAMUEL FREEMAN, Speaker, *pro tem.*"

Colonel Pickering sent letters accompanying his book to the generals commanding continental troops at different junctures and positions, as they gathered to the opening scenes of the war. They are found among his

manuscripts, addressed to Generals Heath, Thomas, Charles Lee, Ward, and Washington. The two last are here given :—

TO THE HONORABLE GENERAL WARD.

“SIR,

“The ensuing plan of discipline, though, through numberless avocations and interruptions, but just completed, was begun soon after the Exercise, ordered by his Majesty in 1764, was recommended by the Provincial Congress to be used in the militia. This Exercise, though well enough adapted to persons already versed in the military art, was yet far too obscure for the instruction of men to whom the discipline of war was novel. At first, however, I supposed a few explanations might render it sufficiently clear and intelligible. But, upon examining that and the Norfolk Discipline, I imagined, by the help of both and other aids, a plan might be framed, which, for a militia, should be preferable to either. Hence I was induced to attempt the following work, little thinking, at that time, my fellow-countrymen would *so soon* be called forth to actual service, and believing a well-disciplined militia to be the most effectual means of preventing our present unhappy conflict in arms. Of the merit of the work it belongs not to me to decide. I assure myself, however, that it may facilitate to the militia the learning the military art; and, considering the circumstances under which the army has been formed, even *there*, to many it may not be unprofitable. In either case, Sir, particularly the latter, it has, perhaps, some claim to your patronage. I wish my abilities and experience had been equal to the production of a work more worthy of your notice. But should I, unhappily, have entirely mistaken my proper talents and business, yet, a candid mind will, at least, excuse a well-meant though fruitless attempt to serve one's country. I am, with great respect, your Honor's most obedient and humble servant,

“T. PICKERING, JR.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"SIR,

"Convinced of the utility, the necessity, at all times, of a well-disciplined militia, to every free state; when the united wisdom of the continent, referring to the contest with the parent kingdom, called on every colonist to prepare for the most unhappy events; and the more immediate recommendations of our Provincial Congress demanded a diligent application to the military art; deeming the plans of discipline then extant inadequate for the instruction of men, unused to this kind of study, and destitute of living instructors, I gladly embraced the opportunity which then presented, of applying to the service of my country the little knowledge and experience an office in the militia had led me to acquire, by writing the following plain rudiments of the military art. They were designed, as their title imports, merely for the militia, and chiefly written before the predicted 'unhappy events' had called my fellow-citizens to arms. This call, and the various avocations and interruptions subsequent thereon, greatly retarded the completion of the work; and perhaps have rendered it less useful than it might otherwise have been. Some parts of it, and those perhaps the most essential, I imagine, however, may still prove advantageous in an army hastily assembled, and frequently called from the exercise of arms to the other equally necessary, but more laborious, occupations of war. This army being, to the joy of every American, committed to your Excellency's care and direction, both duty and inclination lead me to present you the ensuing plan of discipline for a militia, and to submit to your decision the expediency of recommending or permitting its use among the officers and soldiers under your command.

"I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING, JR."

The pre-existing authorities in the British service, referred to as "the 64th" and "Norfolk" Exercise, are examined in Colonel Pickering's book, and the particu-

lars pointed out in which he varies from them. In 1757, the militia of England was put upon a new footing, and, from the special interest taken in the subject at the time, some gentlemen of Norfolk County were led to compile a work called the "Norfolk Exercise." In 1764, the militia was reorganized, and placed under the direction of a new "Exercise," ordered into use by Royal authority. In the American service Colonel Pickering's book at once became the accredited manual, and remained so in the army of the Revolution, until superseded by Baron Steuben's "Regulations for the Infantry of the United States," which work, when offered to Washington by the Baron, was referred to the examination of Colonel Pickering. The estimation in which his knowledge of military science was held by Steuben, as well as by Washington, is shown in the documents quoted in the preceding volume (p. 236). The "Regulations" of Baron Steuben were the result of the latest and widest experience of European armies ; and the cordial and earnest recommendation of them, as a substitute for his own "Easy Plan," is one of the most honorable acts of Colonel Pickering's life.

When all the circumstances that have been related of Colonel Pickering's extraordinary exertions, for several years before the Revolutionary war began, to put his countrymen into a state of preparation for the defence, in arms, of their rights and liberties, are thoughtfully considered, particularly in the composition and publication of the work just described, it cannot be doubted that he foresaw the approaching conflict, in the battle-field, with the mother country. It came earlier than he expected it; and there is, indeed, no express

indication of his expecting it, but it cannot but be inferred from all his proceedings, and it seems to underlie many of the phrases found in his writings. At any rate, it is not to be doubted that some mighty coming event was foreshadowed on his mind.

In a letter to his nephew, John Clark, then about to graduate at Harvard College, dated June 15th, 1774, there is, for instance, a passage which shows that he foresaw some approaching conflict, some momentous crisis, and how wonderfully he beheld, as in prophetic vision, the destiny of America. The letter, as well as Clark's reply, are interesting documents. As a long time had elapsed since hearing from his nephew, the uncle adopted the playful device of considering that he must have departed this life, and addressed his letter to "the ghost" of Clark. The answer is in the same vein, and both are pleasing specimens of classic ingenuity and elegance. The uncle urges him to return to the terrestrial scene. "I adjure you by all that is valuable in life to quit every pursuit which shall prevent your restoration to me, to your friends, and to *your country*." The idea covertly conveyed is that the young scholar must not allow an overweening devotion to the muses, and an exclusive converse with the writings of the great philosophers and poets, heroes and patriots, of past ages, to prevent his taking an earnest interest in what was then transpiring in the living world. He uses this remarkable language, —

"Too long a converse with departed souls has reduced you to your present state. Heroes and patriots, *they* once lived to bless mankind, to save them from sinking under the heavy hand of power, to make them wise and vir-

tuous; and having acted well their parts, they left the theatre of life to dwell among the gods. But you are yet too young to quit the stage for ever. Besides, a *growing empire opens to our view. America now demands the genius, learning, and virtue of all her sons. Either slavery will make one universal blot; or heroes and patriots of this Western world will grace the annals of the present age.*"

In view of such facts and considerations as the foregoing, Colonel Pickering's connection with the Revolutionary war, in his thoughts, feelings, and labors, must be regarded as dating back long prior to 1775. His service in that war itself may be dated from the 26th of February of that year, when, as the newly elected Colonel of the Essex Militia, he naturally took a leading part in the spontaneous and successful rising of the people, at the North Bridge in Salem, to prevent Leslie's battalion of British troops from marching into the country beyond it, to seize some military stores collected by the patriots.

While engaged in his duties as Register of Deeds, and writing at his desk between eight and nine o'clock in the forenoon of the 19th of April, 1775, Captain Epes, of the Danvers company of his regiment, brought the Colonel intelligence that a body of British troops, having crossed from Boston under cover of the night, was early on its march towards Lexington, and had attacked the militia. He ordered Epes to start his company instantly towards the scene, while he, as soon as possible, would collect such other forces as he could, and follow on. Going down to the centre of the town, he issued orders forthwith, and, as Colonel of the regiment, chairman of the Selectmen, and member of the Committee of Safety, succeeded, notwithstanding objections made by many that the distance was so great as to

render the movement unnecessary, in collecting a considerable portion of his regiment, with which he started at once. Halting, for some twenty minutes, near Bell's tavern, in Danvers, now Peabody, to put his men in order for the march, he pushed on over the old road to Lynn. A short respite was given there by the side of a pebbly brook, which is still pointed out, where the men cooled their heated feet. Upon reaching Winter Hill, he first saw the smoke arising from the road along which the enemy was retreating. He ordered his men to load and prime, and hastened them on towards Medford. Before reaching that place, a messenger from General Heath brought directions not to advance further, at that moment; but by a halt, to avoid the fire of the British field-pieces, then nearing that point. Mounting his horse, the Colonel galloped forward to meet Heath for consultation. It was then sunset, but they could see the last of the enemy's forces passing into Charlestown, and beyond reach.

In the preceding volume notice is taken of the attempts, suggested by subsequent party rancor, and countenanced in certain political quarters, to bring censure upon Colonel Pickering for not getting to the scene of action earlier.

It would be difficult to find a stronger illustration of the effect of partisan prejudice to warp the judgment, and pervert the mind, than this calumny. It was ever regarded as such by all who really knew the circumstances of the occasion. It was denounced by his officers and men, and his fellow-citizens generally, at the time when it was first started, and at all times. Venerable persons, who followed him on this march, but had

in later years become ranked among his most vehement political opponents, while standing around the grave, which more than a half-century afterwards received his honored remains, expressed, in my hearing, the indignation with which they looked back upon this most unjust charge.

Whoever examines the route pursued from Salem, will have no other sentiment than surprise, that the force led by Pickering could have reached Medford as soon as it did. The distance, as the road then ran and as given in the almanacs at the time, was eighteen miles. The companies, collected at Salem, could not possibly have started before the middle of the forenoon. The sun shone all day from a clear and cloudless sky, and it was warm even to sultriness. It is known to all how oppressive such weather is, thus prematurely occurring, while heavy winter clothing is still worn, and the body has not yet been acclimated to summer temperature. Gathered, literally, at a moment's warning, from the midst of their ordinary occupations and labors, the men were hurriedly prepared, unprovided with conveniences for their comfort or sustenance by the way. Frequently they were met by intelligence that the British had gone back to Boston, and that the crisis was over. But not being absolutely sure of its correctness, and with a determination to render service if needed, — at any rate, to give evidence of their devotion to the cause, — this patriotic and heroic body of men, worn and hungry as they were, held on with unremitted resolution, zeal, and speed. With occasional slight pauses, to give the officers opportunity to confer as to the direction to be pursued to meet the exigencies of the day, for they were

ignorant of the precise point or line where the enemy might be most speedily or effectually met, they really made no considerable halt until they reached Medford. The companies belonging to Danvers, whom the Colonel had ordered to proceed at once, without waiting for him to collect the residue of the regiment, were in time to encounter the retreating enemy, and rendered the most efficient service. No men — at least, no organized body of men — travelled, that day, any thing like an equal distance to that accomplished by this portion of Colonel Pickering's regiment, and which succeeded in engaging in the fight. The fact stands, a glorious monument of their earnest enthusiasm and noble daring, that the number of killed and wounded belonging to Danvers surpassed that of any other town but Lexington itself. More than a quarter part of all the provincials who fell belonged to Colonel Pickering's regiment, none of whom could have reached the line of conflict until far in the afternoon; demonstrating the prompt bravery with which they exposed themselves. All these things considered, it is indeed surprising that such a calumny should have ever been entertained. The truth is, that it was natural for all to have regretted that the residue of the regiment was just too late to render decisive service in cutting off the flight of the Royal troops. That regret, in the minds of some unacquainted with the circumstances, was allowed to assume the form of complaint. The matter was fully investigated, and justice done to the conduct of Colonel Pickering and his gallant companies.

They remained at Medford that night, guarding the bridge, and prepared for any exigency. The next

morning Colonel Pickering attended a council of officers at Cambridge. Under the excitement of the preceding day, — while their blood was up, — it was urged by some to attack the British in Boston forthwith. Colonel Pickering resisted the proposal, showing how useless it would be to get foothold in Boston, and how vain to try to hold it, while surrounded by the enemy's frigates. He maintained, if any, the first and only thing to be done, was an assault upon Castle Island, now Fort Independence. Any one examining the map of Boston and its environs, and the chart of its harbor, channels, soundings, and islands, will appreciate at a glance the folly of the project proposed, and the military skill and acumen of Pickering, in preferring, in the first instance, an attempt upon Castle Island. It might, perhaps, at that moment of confusion, and while the enemy had not recovered from the shock of the disastrous conflict and retreat of the preceding day, have succeeded. The stroke, if successful, would have astounded the Royal forces, and attracted the admiration of the world. It would have equalled in brilliancy the storming of Stony Point, at a subsequent period of the war, or any similar achievement in history. It would have compelled, if not the immediate surrender, an instant flight, and at great loss, of the British ships and troops, and the first decisive step in the progress of the Revolutionary contest, the evacuation of Boston, been antedated nearly a year. But nothing was concluded upon but to hold their position, organize their forces, and await events. The Essex troops returned to their homes, and remained, as minute men, to answer any call that might be made.

In addition to Colonel Pickering's duties as Register of Deeds, Chairman of the Selectmen of Salem, Town Clerk, and leading member of the Committee of Safety, the Provincial Government of Massachusetts commissioned him a Justice of the Peace, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the county, and sole Judge of Admiralty for the district comprising Boston, Marblehead, Salem, Beverly, Gloucester, and Newburyport. While he held the last-named office he adjudicated upon about one hundred and fifty prize cases. During the period occupied by these multifarious public trusts, besides private business, he finished the preparation for the press and published his "Plan of Discipline for a Militia."

In January, 1776, it having been ascertained that, on account of the extent to which the population of Salem had been drained by the response of the people to previous calls into the military and naval service, it was impossible to raise the quota assigned to the place by an order of the Provincial Congress, Colonel Pickering and others organized a volunteer company, and, in a letter to the Commander-in-Chief, proffered their service, without pay, during the period for which the levy was to be raised, to assist in manning the lines at Cambridge and Roxbury. The answer of Washington shows how highly he appreciated this patriotic act.

In May, of this year, Colonel Pickering was elected a representative from Salem in the General Court, on the distinctly announced readiness of the town to sustain a Declaration, by Congress, of the Independence of the American Colonies. Soon after this the provincial government appointed him to the command of a spécial

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force to be raised for "a sea-coast defence" of Salem and the vicinity. In July the General Court passed an act to bring into the field one-quarter part of the whole population of the Colony capable of bearing arms, to re-enforce the Continental army, at a moment of extreme exigency. Steps to carry out the measure were taken with as much speed as possible throughout the Colony ; but considerable time was required to make the necessary arrangements, to organize companies and regiments, and furnish suitable equipments and supplies for so large a force. It was a great strain upon the resources of a population scattered over farming districts and along the coasts, and whose necessary occupations, at that season of the year, required their presence in gathering the harvests of land and sea. Extraordinary efforts and sacrifices were demanded, and extraordinary means were to be used to rouse and stimulate the people to meet the great emergency.

At the summons of Colonel Pickering the inhabitants of Salem assembled in the meeting-house of the First Church. He went up into the pulpit and addressed them, laying before them fully and plainly the then critical and all but desperate condition of affairs, referring to the defeat on Long Island, the disastrous incidents in New York and its neighborhood, and the retreat of Washington with his shattered and dissolving army into the Jerseys. It was the gloomiest moment of the Revolutionary struggle. He urged the duty of all patriots to rush to the rescue with undaunted spirit, and by freely and bravely devoting their utmost energies and resources to the hour, retrieve the cause. Now, he said, was the time for heroic men to show themselves.

To save the country, business, home, and family must be given up. He urged volunteers to come forward, and led the way; declaring that he, that moment, enlisted for the service; and, coming down from the pulpit, called upon all to follow him. He marched through the aisles of the old church with a drum, it is said, beating before him. As he went, pew doors opened, old men and young, one by one, came out and fell in. Many leading citizens, sea-captains, with their mates and sailors, men of business, caught the enthusiasm of the scene, and, after completing the traverse of the aisles, he passed out into the street, the full quota of the town following him.

The painter and the poet will regard this as one of the historic spectacles of that great war. The vast and venerable church, with its double row of galleries; the crowded, anxious, and excited assembly; the noble form of Pickering, as he strode through the aisles; the sturdy and weather-beaten seamen and master-mariners; the merchants, mechanics, and men of all classes, rising from their pews and benches, and joining him as he passed; the whole mixed multitude expressing in their countenances and attitudes the glowing patriotism and devotion to their imperilled country to which they had all, old and young, men, women, and children, been wrought up,—supply materials to the canvas or the page, rarely equalled.

The ranks of the regiment were filled up from other towns in the county of Essex, and Pickering was commissioned as its Colonel. Having been fully organized, equipped, and provided, it started from Salem, on the 24th of December, 1776, and reached Providence on

the 26th, where it was detained by order of General Lincoln, who met it there. On the 30th it left Providence, and pursued its march through Rhode Island and Connecticut, reaching Danbury, by way of Hartford, on the 2d of January, 1777. Colonel Pickering was ordered to remain there until the 13th, to put in order and forward troops as they arrived. He then proceeded to Bradford, N. Y., and passing through North Castle, arrived at Tarrytown on the 14th, where he came under the command of General Heath. On the 16th of February his regiment crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry. For more than a month it had been engaged in the most arduous kind of service, — skirmishing in the neighborhood of Fort Independence, then strongly held by the British. It was often under fire, but no regular battle took place. The weather was of the worst kind for military or field operations, an alternation of snow and rain, boisterous and most uncomfortable. The regiment was, for the most part, literally on fatigue duty; foraging, marching to and fro, feeling the outposts of the enemy, without shelter or rest, and often suffering for food and adequate clothing. Colonel Pickering shared all the toils and privations of his men, bivouacking with them in the woods, fields, and on the roadsides, sleeping sometimes on the floors of houses or barns, but often on the bare frozen ground. The regiment was constantly on the move, changing its position and route, as orders reached it. It was the custom of the Colonel to strap his pack and blanket to his back, and march, on foot, by the side of the rank and file, while some more weary and worn officer or private rode his horse. By thus sharing their fatigues, he encour-

aged their spirits and kept them more cheerfully to their work.

Leaving the Hudson, the regiment reached Bound Brook, in the neighborhood of Morristown, N. J., General Washington's head-quarters, on the 21st of February.

The time of their service having expired, Colonel Pickering's regiment started for home on the 21st of March. He followed them the next day, and arrived at Salem on the 1st of April. The journey was mostly by the saddle, although, owing to the difficulty of obtaining horses, often on foot. On one particular day he walked twenty miles, and also parts of other days.

During the month that this regiment was connected with the army at head-quarters, the Commander-in-Chief had frequent opportunities to notice the bearing and observe the character of its Colonel; and in no instance did Washington more strikingly demonstrate the faculty of judging of men, for which he was so remarkable, than in this. The confidence he placed in Pickering, shown ever afterwards through the war and his civil administration, was then inspired. A week after he left camp the General wrote a letter tendering him the office of Adjutant-General of the Army of the United States, and enclosing, in case of his declining to accept the situation, a tender of the office to Colonel William Lee, also of Massachusetts. Washington's account of the transaction is in a letter to the President of Congress, dated May 24, 1777. The circumstances connected with it, and the correspondence between the parties, so honorable to them all, having been presented in the previous volume, need no recapitulation here. The

result was that Pickering finally accepted the appointment. The conclusion to which he was led was reached through a conflict of motives that appealed to the strongest principles and deepest sentiments of his nature.

The property of his family consisted mostly of real estate, of which his only, but elder, brother would, according to the law and usage of that day, inherit two-thirds. A large number of sisters, all with families of their own, would have their respective shares of what personal estate there might be, on the death of his parents, who were quite aged and needed his presence. With a wife and infant child—born while he was on his way, three months before, with his regiment to join the army of Washington—it was necessary for him to look to his own exertions for a competent support. The duty of making provision for one's own family was always regarded by him as a sacred obligation. His only reliance was in the emoluments of the clerical offices he held, and in what might be derived from his profession as a lawyer; but these could reasonably be regarded as a sufficient and sure resource. The abandonment of these positions and of prospective legal practice would involve the loss of all he had or could expect. The confidence, however, expressed by Washington, so much above his own estimate of his abilities, the urgency of the call, and his deep sense of patriotic duty, overcame all reluctance, all scruples, and all personal and domestic considerations. His friends and fellow-citizens generally throughout the county appreciated the sacrifice he made, and gave assurance that at the end of his military service the office of Register of Deeds should revert to him; a pledge that would have

been redeemed by the voice of the whole people had the course of events brought him back to his native home.

He left Salem on the 2d of June, 1777, and reached head-quarters, at Middlebrook, N. J., on the 17th. The services on which he then entered, in connection with the army, were so uninterrupted and engrossing that, with the exception of one short, flying visit of a few days to his family in Salem, he never found a respite long enough to return to Massachusetts. The office of Adjutant-General kept him by the side of the Commander-in-Chief, and made him, for the time being, a member of his family. It was a position of great labor and activity, of constant responsibility, and, in all battles, and critical movements in front of the foe, of much exposure. But, in verification of his language in a letter to his wife, "in the most desperate engagements there are many chances in favor of life,"—although his official duties often called him, in bearing orders from the commanding General, to and fro, dashing on horseback in front of the enemies' lines and under fire, his remarkably observable figure, stature, and aspect making him a conspicuous mark,—he was never wounded. This intimate connection with Washington constantly heightened his estimate of the integrity, prudence, and patriotism of that great man, and laid deep the foundations of a personal friendship, that remained invulnerable, on both sides, until death separated them.

Yielding to the requirements of the public service, Washington reluctantly parted with him as his Adjutant-General, when called by Congress to the Board of War. Delay occurring in the organization of the Board, Colonel Pickering continued to perform the duties of

Adjutant-General, going with the army into its winter-quarters at Valley Forge. On the 30th of January, 1778, he finally left camp, and reached Yorktown on the 4th of February to enter upon his new position. The Board of War was composed at that time of the following persons: Generals Gates and Mifflin, Colonels Joseph Trumbull and Timothy Pickering, and Richard Peters, Esquire. It had been created by Congress in the preceding fall. Its duties were extremely important and complicated, embracing those now performed by the War Department, with extraordinary functions arising from the exigencies of the time, in the novel circumstances of the crisis. It stood between Congress and the Commander-in-Chief, communicating in conference and formal written correspondence with both, and devising and concerting all necessary arrangements to carry out the military administration of affairs.

Having been unanimously elected by Congress to the office of Quartermaster-General, Colonel Pickering repaired, on the 5th of August, 1780, to head-quarters, then at Tappan. The circumstances attending this appointment, as presented in the previous volume, demonstrate the estimation in which his energy, fidelity, and ability were held, as well as the boldness of spirit and patriotism that inspired him in encountering its immense responsibility, and the apparently insurmountable difficulties that encompassed it, at that particular juncture.

His immediate predecessor, by universal acknowledgment one of the very ablest men in the army and the country, General Greene, had abandoned the office from a conviction which he had strongly and earnestly urged upon the consideration of Congress, that its duties

were a greater burden than ought to be imposed upon any one man. No reduction of them, however, was deemed practicable. Colonel Pickering much preferred his position as a member of the Board of War, and fully appreciated the complicated labors and discouraging perplexities that embarrassed the action of Quartermaster-General. He expressed to Congress the apprehension that they had over-estimated his ability in calling him to the station, and only yielded at last to a sense of public duty, in obeying the call.

He immediately, as the first step to rescue his department from the evils that were paralyzing it and threatening general disaster, addressed an urgent appeal to Congress to establish the principle that all contracts and purchases for the army should be based upon specie payments. The demand may be considered as the condition upon which he accepted the office ; and Congress complied with it. The depreciation of the currency, which had reached a point that had well-nigh ruined the country, was at once checked. Placing his administration of the military finances and resources of the United States on this only solid basis, he carried his policy firmly and safely through to the end.

His labors were such as would have broken down any one of ordinary strength and power of endurance, bodily and mental. Besides foreseeing and providing for the general wants of the army, every transaction of the minutest kind, that had involved expense, was ultimately subjected to his personal scrutiny, and the vast mass of papers connected with the business of his department, still remaining, demonstrate the enormous accumulation of contracts, accounts, and reports of subordinates sub-

jected to his examination, and the multifarious correspondence he conducted.

By order of Congress, the pay and rations of a Brigadier-General, with some additional items and perquisites, constituted his emoluments, while his rank remained that of a Colonel. It is a noticeable circumstance, quite in contrast with recent practice, that the old Congress did not shower the highest military commissions broadcast over the land. Colonel Pickering held the eminent positions of Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General of the army of the United States, being thus, during nearly the whole of the War of the Revolution, close to the person and in constant intimate counsel with the Commander-in-Chief, but never held a rank or title greater than he bore, before the war began, in the Provincial Militia, under a royal commission; and which same rank and title he won, subsequently, for himself, by raising a regiment in 1776, marching at its head, through the snows of winter, and presenting it to Washington in the Jerseys. For a long time after, the same economy of rank and title was observed. During the war of 1812, the head of one of the chief arms of the service, the artillery, was a Brigadier-General. The title of Colonel, for more than half a century, was so universally attached to Timothy Pickering's name—even when, in later years, successively, the head of different departments of the Government, and member of both branches of Congress, besides having at several times been a Judge—that it seems unnatural to separate it, and it is therefore constantly applied to him throughout this memoir.

Congress also voted that he should continue, as be-

fore, to hold his seat in the Board of War, his pay as such being suspended while in office as Quartermaster-General. His experience, counsel, and co-operation, particularly in drafting papers, were considered so important as to render such an arrangement, in their view, quite important.

The office of Quartermaster-General was continued after the cessation of hostilities, the ratification of the treaty of peace with Great Britain, and the establishment of the Independence of the United States of America. Much time was required to wind up its business. Colonel Pickering superintended the laborious and complicated task of bringing its widely scattered and multifarious accounts to a final settlement and close. He held the office until its abolition on the 28th of July, 1785. That day terminated his Revolutionary service.

It may be mentioned that in December, 1780, his wife and family joined him at Newburgh, and continued to be with or near him, at head-quarters generally, but for considerable intervals of time at Philadelphia, which may be regarded as having been their chief and most permanent abode.

Colonel Pickering's service in the actual War of Independence dates from its first outbreak on the 19th of April, 1775, when by a forced march he led so much of his regiment as could be collected to Medford. From that day, as Judge of Admiralty, on the field with a regiment he had raised for the re-enforcement of the Continental army, as Washington's Adjutant-General, as a member of the Board of War, and in managing the arduous affairs of the Quartermaster's department, his labors were continuous. This embraced a period of

more than ten years. If we take into the account, as it is but reasonable to do, his extraordinary activity, for at least five years antecedent to the conflict in arms, in preparing the people for the impending military crisis, the productions of his pen in the public prints, to this end and purpose, the time he spent in organizing and drilling companies in Salem and the neighborhood, and the elaborate work he prepared and published on the subject, the design of which was to render the militia an effective soldiery for the protection of their civil rights, as expressed in the motto on its title-page, "Men who are not in a capacity to defend their *Liberties*, will certainly *lose* them," it will be seen that his prospective added to his actual service justifies the statement, in the opening of this chapter, that Colonel Pickering's connection with the War of Independence covered a much longer period than the war itself. Well might he say, at the age of forty, that his mature life had all been given to his country.

The fact has been stated, that from the hour when he started from Salem to report at head-quarters, as Adjutant-General, in obedience to the call of Washington, until a year after the war had closed, he had made but one visit to his home in Salem. A few passages from his correspondence, relating to that visit, will afford interesting details. His application for leave of absence, addressed to the President of Congress, was as follows:—

"WAR OFFICE, October 8th, 1778.

"SIR,

"It being now one year and four months since I left my family and friends, having also in that period lost my father, I am under the necessity of requesting of Congress permis-

sion to go home. This indulgence I hoped for in the spring, but General Gates and General Mifflin being then called from the Board, I did not apply for it. I would, if public business required it more than at other times, suspend my request still longer. But, in that regard, it seems very immaterial when I go home, all seasons having hitherto been alike busy. And if I return again, I wish to do it while the roads are passable, and before the severity of winter sets in; the rather, as I should bring my family with me, the removal of which will be impracticable, if my going home be any longer postponed. For the same reason I should hasten back as quick as possible."

The business of the Board of War delayed his departure for some time, and required more or less detention on the way; so that he did not reach Salem until winter had set in, and he could remain there scarcely more than a week. The following letter gives an account of his return. It illustrates the modes and liabilities of travel at that time, and gives a pleasing glance of the character of his first and then only child, John, born February 7th, 1777, whose memory is dear to all who knew him. He became one of the most accomplished citizens, and learned scholars of America, whose labors, as such, will ever be gratefully appreciated by classical students. He was acknowledged as a peer by the greatest philologists of his age.

"PHILADELPHIA, January 1st, 1779.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"You will perceive by the place of this date that we are arrived at Philadelphia. We got here last Wednesday evening, after encountering a variety of difficulties, chiefly from the unusual badness of the weather, which, with so much wagoning, had made the worst roads I ever saw. However, no harm has happened to any of us, save that John has a slight cold. Nothing could have accommodated us better than

the wagon. Every contrivance for the carriage of ourselves and baggage answered perfectly well. All the causes of delay on the road Isaac can relate particularly. I regretted the loss of time, and increased expenses by those delays, but was happy to find that the mode of riding occasioned very little fatigue to my wife and John. The latter slept half the time, and the other half was singing or enjoying the ride, and looking at every object, as we passed, with so much satisfaction as hardly twice to complain or appear discontented. We were both surprised to find him so extremely quiet. We think he has grown considerably fatter and heavier since we set out. I shall go into the house I hired to-morrow, when we shall have collected sufficient materials for commencing housekeeping. I should have written to you several times on our way hither ; but, as I could only mention our difficulties and delays, I chose to postpone it, that we only might feel the trouble of them, hoping we should arrive safe at last, as we have done. We heard twice on the road of a gentleman and his family, from Rhode Island, going in a wagon to this city, about ten days before us, who were twice overset on this side the North River. The wagoner, it seems, wanted to return, but the gentleman said he would not part with him on any account, for he had the singular faculty of oversetting them without doing any hurt. Perkins drove very well ; and, notwithstanding the rocks and gullies, there was scarcely a chance of our oversetting during the whole journey. On account of the detention I have given Perkins something more than he agreed for, together with my woollen overalls, which were very serviceable on the way. I think sister Goolle has the pieces of the same cloth (or they were left at my house), which he should have to mend them. I have paid Perkins fifteen dollars towards the one hundred I was to give him, and drawn an order on you for eighty-five, agreeably to your proposal. The amount of my expenses on the journey is £134.3, full double what I expected." . . .

He made another short visit to Salem after the close of the war, but before his service as Quartermaster-Gen-

eral of the Revolutionary army was concluded. It is described in the following passages of letters : —

“NEWBURGH, January 12th, 1784.

“DEAR SIR,

“I have concluded to take a ride to Massachusetts while there is snow on the ground. On reflection I thought no time would be so convenient for a year to come. My brother and Mr. Williams have requested it, the latter on commercial as well as friendly accounts. A little public business will coincide. I shall doubtless set out to-morrow morning. The sleighing is good, and likely to continue. Be so good as to hand the enclosed to my wife.

“SAMUEL HODGDON, Esq.”

“NEWBURGH, January 12th, 1784.

“MY DEAR BECKEY,

“About a week since I wrote you that I intended in two or three days to set out on a visit to our friends at Boston and Salem ; but I have not been able to do it. However, to-morrow I shall doubtless commence this journey. The weather is severely cold, which makes good sleighing. I shall go in a sleigh ; and as Major Cogswell is to be discharged to-day, he takes a seat in my sleigh. When I, at first, concluded to make this tour, I wished for John Pickering, that I might carry and present him to his grandmother and uncle and to all his relations ; but I shall find perhaps an opportunity hereafter. I shall stay at Salem so short a time that I do not think a letter from you can reach that place before I leave it. . . . A thought has occurred which I will mention because I persuade myself you will not only approve, but be pleased with the idea. Among my nieces at Salem I trust one may be found who will be desirous, or at least contented, to visit Philadelphia, and stay there till spring, or after the month of May. Should this be the case, and the sleighing continue, I shall certainly bring one of them along with me ; which at the same time will oblige me to proceed without delay to Philadelphia, which circumstance you will not be displeased with. The assistance of such a niece will relieve you, and her company be agreeable to both of us.

. . . "I remain, my dear, in perfect health : God grant you and the children the same enjoyment.

"I shall write you from Boston or Salem, and return in the beginning of February. In the mean time I remain, as ever, wholly yours.

"Tell John and Tim they must continue very good boys that they may not disprove the favorable accounts I shall give of them to their grandmother, uncle, and aunts. Adieu!

"T. PICKERING.

"MRS. R. PICKERING."

One of the first acts of Colonel Pickering in entering upon the office of Quartermaster-General was to organize the entire transportation business of the army into a distinct branch or bureau of his department, which he committed to the charge of Major Thomas Cogswell, the gentleman above spoken of as the companion of his sleigh-ride from Newburgh to Salem. Major Cogswell was a native of Haverhill, Massachusetts, from which place he started on the 19th of April, 1775, at the head of a hundred volunteers, for Lexington. Although from the distance unable to reach the scene of action until the day was over, he and his brave followers showed their zeal in the cause. He never sheathed the sword then drawn while the war lasted. In a letter dated in January, 1781, at New Windsor head-quarters, Washington thus spoke of him : "Major Cogswell has been always represented to me as an intelligent, brave, and active officer." In the previous volume of this biography, Colonel Pickering's letter of honorable discharge of Major Cogswell is given. Its date, Newburgh, 14th of January, 1784, shows that they did not start on their journey so soon as they had expected.

Major Cogswell spent the rest of his days, holding the office of Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, at

Gilmanton, N. H., where he died on the 3d of September, 1810, sixty-four years of age.

In compliance with Colonel Pickering's wishes, one of his nieces accompanied him in his sleigh, on his return; a daughter of his sister Lydia and George Williams, of the same name as her mother; and he often refers to the happiness her visit of several months imparted to his family. In a letter to his sister, Lois Gooll, the mother of the wife of the late Judge Samuel Putnam, of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, dated Philadelphia, May 17th, 1784, he thus expresses his estimate of this beloved niece:—

“ Lydia is a charming girl. My wife and I shall be very unwilling to part with her. I hope her mother will not be in haste to send for her, unless Lydia herself should desire it; which I imagine she will not do yet.”

Lydia returned by vessel to Providence, July 3d, 1784. She married Theodore Lyman, and was the mother of a family honored in its branches and descendants. The late distinguished citizen and Mayor of Boston, a gentleman of rare accomplishments and philanthropy, Theodore Lyman, was one of her sons, and the present President of Harvard University, Charles William Eliot, is her grandson.

This general review of Colonel Pickering's Revolutionary service would not be complete without reference to the labors of his pen. From the earliest stages of his education he had made style an object of special care and study, aiming to acquire facility of composition, and especially a plain, exact, and terse use of language. His success in this training was one of the elements of his usefulness and distinction in all the diversified spheres

of his life, and not the least during its military epoch. It is easy to detect certain rules or principles by which he was careful to be guided in composition. Of words of any thing like equivalent meaning, he chose the shortest and simplest in its formation. So far as could be done, without lowering the dignity of the diction, he preferred to use language and phrases that were familiar to common speech. He avoided loading his sentences with unnecessary terms or expletives, and employed only such, or as many, adjectives as were absolutely required to give the true color to the ideas designed to be depicted or conveyed. He had discovered that brevity was a chief element of force, that words never ought to be allowed to encumber, obscure, or dilute the sense, and that figurative or rhetorical expressions were not to be sought for merely to embellish, but only to elucidate, the thought. But, above all, he clung to the good old Anglo-Saxon phraseology, refraining as much as possible from composite terms, either of foreign extraction or ancient, even if classical, forms, whether in whole or in part. A writer trained under such a strict system of restraint, whose tastes are adjusted to a severe simplicity, may safely depend upon the glow of composition for all requisite fervor and force. It was so eminently in his case. The warmth of his temperament, the earnestness of his nature, and the strength of his faculties, without violating the simplicity of his language, but in fact in virtue of it, not only in the productions of his pen, but under the excitements of discussion and conversation, and in the ardor of debate, often raised him to the most effective results of eloquence.

The views now given of Colonel Pickering's style as a

writer, and the elements of its excellence, are illustrated in all his public documents and private correspondence. They are suggested by an examination of his earliest productions, before the War of the Revolution; in his articles found in the columns of newspapers; official communications in connection with Committees of Safety and the movements of the patriots generally at that time; in his elaborate work on the military art: but pre-eminently in the address delivered by him to the British Governor, from the merchants and freeholders of the town of Salem, declining any favor from the Crown, to the injury of their suffering brethren in Boston, which received the encomium of Edmund Burke, was applauded on both sides of the water, and will hold for ever a most conspicuous place in the history of this country.

Throughout the war, Colonel Pickering's promptness and felicity with the pen were constantly called to the public service, and estimated most highly by his associates. From the purity, accuracy, elegance, and force of his style, his able and distinguished colleagues in the Board of War felt it proper to throw upon him the labor of inditing the principal part of their correspondence with Congress and the Commander-in-Chief; while documents of this sort connected with the conduct of the Quartermaster's department would fill volumes. The student of American history, desirous of appreciating, in detail, the exigencies and difficulties in providing for the maintenance of the War of the Revolution, will find materials lucidly stated scattered abundantly through the manuscripts of Colonel Pickering. The estimate in which his qualities as a writer came to be held is demonstrated by the fact that he was called by the united

voices of his comrades of the highest grades to draft the answer of the army to the farewell address to them of their illustrious chief. The honorable service was well performed.* While the document, in some passages, rises to the highest dignity of expression, and glows with the warmest eloquence, it is pervaded by simplicity of diction, and avoids all fulsome adulation. It would be difficult, however, in all the eulogies or benedictions that have been pronounced upon the great hero and patriot, to find the verdict of history and the love of the people uttered in more fitting language.

The extent of the service Colonel Pickering rendered with his pen, during the war, cannot be measured or ascertained. In general, it may be said, that his associates availed themselves of his facility and ability as a writer freely and at all times. Washington could not possibly — no one man could — have personally composed all the innumerable documents that required his signature; and it was his good fortune, as well as great wisdom, to have in his entire confidence and in his official family, men like Pickering and Hamilton, who could on an emergency, and in a pressure, put his ideas into the most exact, lucid, and forcible expression.

As a pleasing as well as decisive illustration of the value attached by his brother officers to his style as a writer, and as shedding light upon the character of another of the heroes of the War of Independence, Major-General Henry Knox, the following anecdote may here be given. Colonel Pickering often related it, not at all from personal vanity, — a sentiment utterly un-

* The "answer," with the circumstances relating to it, is given in the previous volume, p. 487.

known to him,—but to demonstrate the true noble-mindedness of Knox, upon whose chivalrous gallantry and sterling worth he delighted to expatiate.

In October, 1780, a State Constitution went into operation in Massachusetts. This auspicious event was justly regarded with great interest then, and has an historic importance that will be more deeply appreciated as time rolls on. The American Revolution, as a military contest, is a less memorable and instructive occurrence than the transformation into States of provincial governments. This is the grand and only adequate consummation of efforts to redeem a people to liberty. To break down an old form of government is one thing, to organize a new one is the harder and greater work. While the war was still raging, and its issue dark and discouraging, the people of Massachusetts entered on and deliberately went through the steps necessary to reconstruct the body-politic upon the basis of self-government; and, clothed with all the functions requisite to preserve and develop the elements of freedom, equal rights, personal security, and civil order,—freed from the abuses that had, in all other countries and all ages, been inseparable from political power,—that State rose to view as a REPUBLIC. The august process was passed through in all the Colonies, travelling substantially in the same path, until they severally became sovereign States. This completed the work of the American Revolution, and solved the problem for all other nations, in all coming time. The fact that this great American nation consists wholly of States, which, although united into one empire, still continue, within their proper sphere, sovereign, entire, and equal as govern-

ments, constitutes the peculiar glory of the United States, among the nations, and makes it the Model Republic.

The fact that this organic change had been consummated, under circumstances that commanded general attention, was rendered still more interesting by the election of John Hancock to be the Governor of the new-born Commonwealth, — one of the immortal two proscribed patriots of 1775, whose bold autograph, as President of Congress, stands so conspicuously at the head of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

In the great excitement produced in the encampment of the American army by the receipt of this intelligence, the idea was suggested, that a special expression was due to the occasion by the Massachusetts troops in the vicinity of head-quarters. A meeting of the officers was accordingly notified by General Knox, the highest in rank from that State, to be held at his quarters. When they were assembled, the General rose and explained the object of the meeting. After an expression of opinion all around, in accordance with the suggestion of the General that an address ought to be signed by them severally and despatched to Governor Hancock, congratulating him on his election, and expressing the joy with which the soldiers of Massachusetts had heard of it, the General again rose and said that not doubting such would be the resolve of the officers, and feeling that what was done it were better to do quickly, fearing also that it might not have occurred to any other officer, he had ventured to write a form of address, which, if approved, might be used on the occasion. Its reading, of course, was called for. Upon finishing the document, he laid it on the

table and resumed his seat. Not exactly fancying the diffuseness of the General's composition, and thinking it of real importance that there should be greater conciseness in such a paper, — disagreeable as it was to take such a step, — Colonel Pickering rose, and, in the name of the whole assembly, thanked the General for having called the meeting, and for his forethought and considerateness in preparing a draft of an address. He entirely agreed with the General that what was done had better be done quickly; and, like the General, doubting whether any other gentleman would come prepared with a form of language, he also had written one. Upon his saying this, the General, in the most cordial and earnest manner, called upon him to read it, which he forthwith did. At its conclusion Knox instantly rose, stretched out his hand (bearing the marks, in its somewhat mutilated fingers, of an accidental explosion of his fowling-piece, while shooting at ducks in Boston harbor, several years before the Revolution), clutched up his own manuscript, put it into his pocket, and exclaimed, in the heartiest manner, "I like it a thousand times better than my own. Let us sign and send on Colonel Pickering's address."

It was transmitted, through General Lincoln, to Governor Hancock, whose reply, couched in grateful and becoming terms, was dated December 1st, 1780.

The address of the officers was as follows: —

"TO HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN HANCOCK, ESQ., GOVERNOR
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

"SIR,

"The General and Field-Officers of the Massachusetts troops, in behalf of themselves and their brethren in the

field, take the earliest opportunity to present your Excellency with their congratulations on your advancement to the highest seat in the Government of the State; an elevation the more honorable, as being effected by the voluntary suffrages of a free people.

We are happy that such a mode of electing the first magistrate, and principal officers of the Government, is fixed by the Constitution of the State; a mode so contrived as to preclude delay, and which cannot be subjected to corrupt influence on one hand, nor, on the other, to riotous tumult or cabal.

We are happy that the Constitution is framed on such generous and enlarged principles, that no member of the State, whatever be his occupation or employment, whose circumstances render him sufficiently independent, and who gives reasonable assurances of his fidelity, can be excluded from any of the rights of a free citizen.

We shall be happy when the time shall come that we may again assume the character of citizens, — a character of which we never divested ourselves, even in idea.

We shall be happy to partake, with our fellow-citizens, the blessings of a well-earned peace; and our happiness will be completed in the reflection that, under the direction of Heaven, we, by our exertions, sufferings, and dangers, in conjunction with those of our fellow-soldiers, have been so greatly instrumental in acquiring them.

But, before that wished-for period shall arrive, much remains to be performed, much to be endured, and in doing and suffering we shall cheerfully participate with our fellow-citizens. Much, especially, will be expected from those who hold distinguished places in public life. Placed at the head of the Government, your Excellency will have many opportunities of rendering the most important services to the country at large, and to the troops of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in particular; and your discernment of its true interest, and your fellow-feeling for those who greatly suffer in their country's cause, will induce you to improve them.

We will no longer detain your Excellency than to express our sincere wishes that the execution of your important office

may be attended with all that success and applause of your fellow-citizens which a wise and faithful administration of the Government shall deserve.

CAMP AT TOTOWAY, November 12th, 1780."

An interesting passage of the same kind occurred a few years afterwards between these large-hearted men. It is mentioned in the previous volume, page 487. The committee appointed by the officers of the army to draft an answer to Washington's "Farewell Orders," issued on the 3d of November, 1782, seem to have agreed to prepare each a form of language, and to submit them for consideration. On coming together, General McDougall excused himself on account of the pressure of other engagements; General Knox and Colonel Pickering produced their manuscripts. Pickering was much pleased with that offered by Knox; but the latter, again manifesting his superiority to all pride of authorship or personal conceit, declared his preference for the Colonel's production, which was reported to a full meeting of the officers and unanimously adopted.

As Colonel Pickering's military career was finally closed with the abolition of the Revolutionary office of Quartermaster-General,—the entire residue of his eventful and remarkable life being passed in civil stations and private pursuits,—it may be proper, in concluding a retrospective glance of the period embraced in the first volume of this work, to offer some general remarks, despatching all that may remain to be said of him as a soldier of the Revolution, which will be comprised in the three following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

His Military Character.

1775-1783.

COLONEL PICKERING'S life as a soldier terminated, strictly speaking, as has been observed in the preceding chapter, with the War of the Revolution, and the abolition of the office of Quartermaster-General. As he never afterwards had any connection with military affairs, except as Secretary of War in Washington's cabinet, it may be well at this point also, rather than at the conclusion of his biography, to sum up what may be required to be said as to his military character, and to dispose of such matters as are particularly connected with his service in the army of the Revolution.

It appears, by the documents presented in the previous volume of this work (pp. 135, 136), that Congress having recommended Colonel William Lee, of Marblehead, for the office of Adjutant-General, Washington offered the place in the first instance to Colonel Pickering, with a request, if he could not make it compatible with his other obligations to accept it, to convey to Colonel Lee an enclosed tender of the same. Pickering, feeling constrained to decline the appointment, despatched the letter to Lee, who immediately repaired to headquarters at Morristown, New Jersey, and expressed to Washington an earnest desire that Pickering might be prevailed on to take the situation, declaring that from "a

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very intimate and friendly acquaintance" he knew him to be "a first-rate military character," and that in his opinion no one was better qualified for the post. Pickering having been finally persuaded to accept the proposal, Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, referring to these circumstances, and in justification of his own course, said: "This conduct in preference of Colonel Pickering I was induced to adopt from the high character I had of him, both as a great military genius cultivated by an industrious attention to the study of war, and also as a gentleman of liberal education, distinguished zeal, and great method and activity in business." It further appears that Pickering, feeling that his ability to fill the office was over-estimated by Washington, used this language in accepting the place: "My military character, which you are pleased to mention as a motive to the appointment, is, in my own estimation, of no great account. I have, it is true, studied the rudiments of the military art, but have very small, or rather no, pretensions to capacity and skill in the important scenes of war."

It becomes a matter of interest to ascertain how far the military reputation with which he joined the army, thus attested by Washington and Lee, but modestly disavowed by himself, was sustained by his actual service.

It is quite certain that no officer of the Revolutionary army had been more conversant with military science, as taught in books, than Timothy Pickering. His writings show that he had studied the history of the great masters of the art of war, and read the European and English authors on the subject, from Julius Cæsar down to his own time. He was familiar with the prin-

cial manuals and authorized systems relating to it, in all their details. Besides this book learning, he had for years been accumulating the results of personal observation and experience, in exercising his own company and others of neighboring towns, in the *minutiae* of the soldier's duty. His own treatise, the "Plan of Discipline," covers, as has been stated, the whole ground fully, including every, even the smallest, particular as to the attitudes, postures, and movements of men and officers in the drill, at the parade, and on the field, in all evolutions and actions, and in the handling and use of sword and musket. As a teacher of rudiments to the raw soldier, and in the exercise and training of a company or battalion, he probably had no superior. It may be considered quite certain that no private citizen in the country had taken more pains, or spent more time, in volunteer efforts to prepare his fellow-citizens for the approaching contest, as Captain of his Salem company, the instructor of other companies, and as Colonel, before the war began, of the Essex regiment. When, afterwards, he raised another regiment, and marched it to head-quarters, we may be sure that no Colonel of that day presented to Washington a body of troops more perfectly in hand. This is shown in the impression made upon the mind of the Commander-in-Chief during the short period the regiment remained under his eye, and which led him, at the first opportunity, and notwithstanding the recommendation by Congress of another distinguished officer, to call its commander to the post of his Adjutant-General.

As his service in the Revolutionary war, after joining the staff of Washington, took him to a great degree out

of the field of personal and particular command, no opportunity occurred of showing his capacity for the immediate management of divisions of troops against the enemy, or conducting campaigns or battles ; and the means are not afforded of determining his military talents on this scale. But from the advice he gave on several occasions of emergency, a judgment may perhaps be formed with considerable confidence. As has been before remarked, his suggestion in a council of officers on the morning after the battle of Lexington, that to seize and hold Castle Island was the only feasible thing to be done at that crisis against the British forces in the town and harbor of Boston ; that if an offensive operation were then attempted, it should be at that point, — besides showing his readiness to engage in a daring enterprise, and meet any danger, will be regarded by all who examine the then state of things, in connection with the topography, as bearing the stamp of military genius. If successful, it would have compelled the surrender of the enemy's troops and fleet, and taken its place in history among the boldest and most heroic achievements ever accomplished. Its effects upon the current of events would have been incalculable. At the battle of Brandywine, when the fate of the army was at stake, and perplexity hung over the condition of things, the advice of the Adjutant-General, given with great emphasis, and heeded by the Commander-in-Chief, prevented what would otherwise have been an utter defeat. His views, urged with equal earnestness in the affair of the Chew house at Germantown, but overruled by the older and more cautious Generals, would, if followed, it appears to be universally conceded, have saved the

day. In drawing the lines around the enemy at Yorktown, and inflicting upon Cornwallis the decisive and last blow of the war, Colonel Pickering's opinions and suggestions were of invaluable service.

The conclusion to be drawn from instances like these is, that if he had occupied the position of a military commander in charge of campaigns, directing the manœuvres of armies, and conducting the shock of battle, he would have exhibited energy, promptness, and boldness; in all probability, have achieved great distinction and success; and established the character of an eminent military commander. He suffered, however, one inconvenience, disqualifying him, to some extent, for services in the field.

He was near-sighted, and could not survey distinctly a wide or distant area. He had experienced this defect from early life; and it was, no doubt, one of the considerations that led him to be so diffident of his ability to execute the functions of an Adjutant-General. He was under the necessity of wearing glasses. A mounted officer, often having occasion to ride swiftly to and from remote points, conveying orders and bringing intelligence to his chief, frequently where there were no roads to guide him, while the complicated and fluctuating movements of a battle were going on, must have felt more or less embarrassed by dependence upon such an artificial aid to sight, liable to be misplaced, broken, or thrown off. But so great were his qualifications in all other respects, that no difficulty, on this score, appears to have been noticed while he was on Washington's staff.

Spectacles were very little in use at that time compared with the present. Probably but very few, if any

others, were worn in the Revolutionary army. An old soldier of that war, who had enlisted from an interior town of Massachusetts, related to me the following:—

While the army was encamped near the Hudson, in the neighborhood of the Highlands, in a stormy night, somewhat before the break of day, they were roused by an alarm. Companies and regiments hurried to their posts. While waiting under arms to receive orders, and all alive with the excitement of an expected encounter with the enemy, from whatever quarter he might appear, after the day had dawned, a mounted officer was seen approaching, at the top of his speed, along the road, which was straight and in view for some distance. As he came dashing on, his eyes at intervals, and for the moment, seemed to be balls of flame. The frequent recurrence of this strange phenomenon attracted great interest. When the horseman came near, the stalwart form of the Adjutant-General was recognized, and the alternating and intermittent light was found to be the reflection on his eye-glasses of the blazing camp-fires he had passed on his route. My informant assured me that this was the first time in his life he had ever seen spectacles.

In the Board of War but little opportunity was afforded for the immediate and distinctive display of what are considered military talents. Colonel Pickering was transferred to that position on account of his known capacity for the transaction of business, his methodical habits of exactness, the clearness of his mental processes, the energy of his character, and his incorruptible integrity. These qualities had become fully appreciated by the Commander-in-Chief and by Congress, and were

acknowledged by his associates in that important commission.

While the functions of members of the Board of War withdrew them from the area of, strictly speaking, military service, it was not so with the office of Quartermaster-General, which, particularly at that time in that army, opened a field for the display of some of the elements of character and genius essential to the conduct and management of a protracted war waged over a wide territory. The great commander finds but a part of his sphere of operations in the movements and evolutions of troops in the progress of campaigns in front of the foe, or on the field of battle. The calculations and arrangements for the supply of food, clothing, ammunition, and the means of transportation, comprise a vital department of military science. It has always been the great work of war. The most renowned generals in all ages, and more especially in recent times, have derived their reputation and success from the foresight, comprehension of view, and ability with which this department has been administered.

In the war of the American Revolution, it was pre-eminently difficult, and called for the highest order of talent. The theatre of the conflict embraced a continent. At its opening, the country was wholly unprepared to meet the demands of the crisis in this particular. Its resources and capabilities were undeveloped and unknown. Brave men, as at Lexington and Bunker Hill, could seize their muskets and rush to the field; but how to keep them there, — how to sustain them in aggregate masses; to feed, clothe, and shelter them; supply them with ammunition, arms, and accoutrements;

and transport them, with all their luggage, from point to point, over a new, rough, broken country, as the scene of the struggle shifted all along the Atlantic regions, — this was the problem which tasked the great mind of Washington, as it does more or less all commanders of armies, and all in any way responsibly entrusted with the conduct of war. In the Revolutionary army, this vast burden of duty and care pressed with its chief weight upon the department of which the Quartermaster-General was the head. The immense mass of papers relating to it among the manuscripts of Colonel Pickering — business correspondence with subordinates and persons of all sorts furnishing supplies, and accounts without number, great and small — demonstrate the magnitude of the service. It is evident that all passed under his own eye, and, in every detail, was subject to his direction and examination. None but a man of his herculean strength — physical, intellectual, and moral — could have discharged such a trust. The circumstances under which he was appointed to the office show that this was the opinion of Congress and the Commander-in-Chief.

The grandest military achievement of the Revolutionary contest — that which stamps Washington with the character of a great General, on a level with the greatest of all nations and ages — was the instantaneous change of the whole scheme of the war, by which all movements and operations in all quarters of the country were at once simultaneously reversed, and the combined American and French armies transferred with marvellous rapidity from both sides of the Hudson to the lower counties of Virginia, south of the Chesapeake, — from New York to Yorktown.

The alliance with France furnished an effective re-enforcement to the American army, but its vital importance was that it supplied the United States with a naval force competent to meet that of Great Britain. At the moment of its consummation Washington conceived a purpose that was cherished and strengthened from day to day, and at last fully developed at a conference with Count de Rochambeau at Weathersfield, on the 23d of May, 1781. It was to draw the allied army around New York, while the French fleet was to blockade that port, thus hemming in Sir Henry Clinton and capturing him with the main British army having its head-quarters there. This would end the war. To accomplish it all the forces, land and naval, of France and America, that could possibly be made available, were to move towards New York. Count de Rochambeau immediately started his troops in that direction; and it was understood that the French fleet, then in two separate squadrons at distant stations, would co-operate; that under Count de Barras to repair forthwith from Newport, Rhode Island, to Chesapeake Bay to block up the British army in Virginia, under Cornwallis; while the main squadron, under Count de Grasse, consisting of about thirty ships of the line, was to make its way from the West Indies to Sandy Hook; thus shutting up both Cornwallis and Clinton, preventing all supplies, re-enforcements, or succors whatever, from passing between them or reaching them from England, and ultimately securing the capture of them both. This was surely a splendid plan of joint operations, and every thing seemed to show that it was practicable.

Washington did his part. He addressed earnest and

repeated appeals to Congress, the Governors of States, and all persons in authority, to aid in the operation by sending every possible man to swell his ranks, and by forwarding supplies of all sorts to the utmost of their capacity. The country responded to his demands most nobly. It drained its resources to give effect to this last great effort for its deliverance. The work went on most auspiciously, and every thing promised a sure result.

On the 14th of August, 1781, Robert Morris, having arrived at camp, accompanied by Colonel Pickering, went to head-quarters to confer with the General in reference to matters connected with the Board of War. When they entered his apartment he was striding to and fro in such a state of uncontrolled excitement that he did not seem to notice their presence. They immediately withdrew. In a short half-hour they were sent for, and found him clothed with his usual serene dignity of countenance and mien. The terrific storm had wholly passed, and was succeeded by a perfect calm. After transacting their business, he referred to the scene that had just occurred, apologizing for his extraordinary appearance on the occasion; he proceeded to explain it in a perfectly composed manner, giving in general terms the great plan that had been agreed upon by him and the French commanders; he related how, for months, his thoughts and heart had been fixed upon it, and the resources of his army and country strained to carry it to its consummation. He pointed out how certain would have been its success, and dilated upon the glorious consequences in the independence, freedom, and happiness of America. He went on to express, — perfectly controlling his feelings, which were evidently

wrought to the highest pitch, and tossing like a suppressed volcano within, — in slow and measured phrase, how bitterly and utterly he had been disappointed. He intimated that this was not the first disappointment of the kind, and, with vexation of heart, exclaimed, “I wish to the Lord the French would not raise our expectations of a co-operation, or fulfil them!” Pausing for a moment, he again, but more particularly, sketched the elements of the scheme which had engrossed and absorbed him. General Greene was taking care of the Carolinas, and nothing adverse was to be apprehended from that quarter. The Marquis Lafayette was baffling and holding Cornwallis in Virginia. The Count de Barras was to keep the Chesapeake closed, so that no relief could come or go between the two chief divisions of the British army in New York and Virginia. The whole programme was being carried out; all things were working to a charm. The French forces under Rochambeau were reaching their positions, and New York was invested by land. All that was wanted was the appearance of the French fleets at their respective destinations, and information to that effect was impatiently and hourly expected. On the 20th of July the first shock was given to his hopes. A letter was that day received by him from Count de Barras, informing him that, instead of going to the Chesapeake, he had concluded to take his fleet to Newfoundland. Astonished beyond measure by this unaccountable departure from the plan, he brought his mind to submit to the disappointment. All then depended upon the appearance of the great fleet of Count de Grasse in the waters of New York, and it was constantly looked for with feverish and painful anxiety.

On that very morning, August 14th, just before Morris and Pickering entered, he had received a letter from Count de Grasse, stating that he should not come to New York at all. That he was designing to take his squadron, with a large land force on board, to the Chesapeake, and would be under the necessity of returning with his fleet to the West Indies by the middle of October! The same hour word had been brought that a large re-enforcement to Sir Henry Clinton from England had entered the harbor of New York! This intelligence had overwhelmed him for the moment. Resentment, indignation, and despair had burst upon him. His hopes were blasted, and he felt that the cause was lost and his country ruined.

In relating the details of this occasion, and describing the furious outburst of Washington's wrath at the first interview, and its entire disappearance at the second, with so short an interval of time, Colonel Pickering used to say that such a complete triumph of a great mind, over adversity and over itself, he had never witnessed. The common impression, perhaps, is that Washington was a man of a cold temperament. The truth is that he naturally had the strongest passions, and the deepest sensibility; and affords one of the most remarkable instances in human history of habitual and almost constant self-control. Only in a few emergencies was he ever known to lose it, and then, it may almost literally be said, but for a moment. The case just described is one. Another was when some of his troops were, as he thought, disgracefully panic-stricken and driven back through New York City after the disastrous defeat on Long Island, and another when he met General

Charles Lee retreating at the battle of Monmouth. Ordinarily, neither the extremity of misfortune, nor the most appalling danger, nor the folly or wrong-doing of others, could disturb the equanimity of his demeanor. He ruled his own spirit as he did that of his fiery war-horse, with a strong, firm, and steady hand. This is one of the chief glories of his character.

On the recovery of his mind from this great shock, instantly, perhaps before summoning back to his presence Pickering and Morris, he formed the design the prosecution of which was, as I have said, the most brilliant achievement of the war, and secured its glorious termination. He communicated it before the day was over to Colonel Pickering, and a conference was had with him, as to the measures to be taken to carry it out. He directed Pickering to put the whole machinery of his department into immediate operation, so that the artillery should be prepared to move at once, transportation be provided, and all necessary arrangements made to furnish the army with what might be requisite at its start on a long march, and to have supplies collected at convenient points all along the way, so that provisions, clothing, horses, wagons, boats, and vessels should be in readiness wherever needed. The details of the whole campaign were settled between them. The plan was this:—

As Washington could no longer think of moving upon Sir Henry Clinton in New York, he resolved to do the business for Lord Cornwallis in Virginia. Orders were given for the French troops, and as many of his own as could be spared from guarding the North River and the posts around New York, to begin to break up

their encampments, and prepare for a march. Every thing was put in process for the transference of the various divisions from the Hudson to James River. It was necessary to make the great movement without an hour's delay. The presence of Count de Grasse's fleet in the Chesapeake was absolutely necessary to the success of the manœuvre, and it could remain in those waters only to the middle of October. The scheme required to be accomplished in two short months.

The combined army was actually in motion in five days. The American detachments crossed the Hudson on the 20th of August. Rochambeau passed over his legions on the 21st; on the 24th they were all in full way. The arrangements were based upon reaching the Head of Elk on the 8th of September. Washington, with the advance divisions, was there on the 6th. Two days after embarkation began at the Head of Elk; and the whole army was soon afloat, and descending the Chesapeake from that point and Baltimore to James River. Washington and Rochambeau were at Mount Vernon on the 10th, at Fredericksburg on the 12th, at New Castle on the 13th, and at Williamsburg on the 14th. On the 20th, every thing being ready, the whole army was marched within two miles of York, and the siege of that place began. The French fleet was at hand, and the investment of the enemy complete. The artillery was brought up and put into battery. Trenches were dug, and redoubts erected. On the 6th of October the first parallel was begun, and finished on the 8th, within 600 yards of Cornwallis's works. On the night of the 11th the second parallel was commenced, and completed on the 14th. On that evening a brilliant and

successful assault was made upon the enemy's redoubts. On the 15th the enemy made an ineffectual *sortie*. On the 17th Cornwallis sent a message preliminary to a surrender. On the 19th, articles of capitulation were signed; and the British forces, land and naval, were all prisoners of war. Virginia and the Middle States were wholly rescued from the foe. The work was done, and the Independence of America placed beyond all further doubt.

This crowning victory of the Revolutionary conflict was accomplished within two months from the starting of the allied army from the Hudson. Whoever examines the map, and marks the distances and the route travelled, considers the sultriness of the season in that region, particularly during the first month of the march, and takes into view the unavoidable difficulties of the travel and transportation of large bodies of troops in those days over a country so intersected by rivers and bays, must feel that the movement was indeed a splendid achievement of organization, energy, and strategic skill.

Of course the burden of the great work was chiefly on Washington himself, whose personal labors were immense. His mind conceived the plan; his wisdom guided its progress; and his prowess and force of will pressed it on to consummation. No one, however, was more careful than he was that the honor of the work should be justly shared by all who participated in it. Carrying the cannon, with all their appendages, over such a long and rough route, was one of the principal difficulties. That was the service committed to General Knox, at the head of the artillery through the war. Washington bore testimony, in frequent expressions, to

the ability of that distinguished officer, in the execution of his trust on this occasion.

At the conference just mentioned, on the 14th of August, 1781, between Washington and Colonel Pickering, the latter acting in the double capacity of consulting and co-operative member of the Board of War and Quartermaster-General of the army, all the arrangements were consummated for the transference of the allied forces from the Hudson to James River. The necessary papers were drawn up, and orders prepared. The distances and the times of movements and junctions of the forces ascertained and determined; the quantities and descriptions of supplies by the way agreed upon; all materials and equipments calculated and provided for, and the requisite means of transportation estimated and arranged. The great work was comprehended, in all its multiplex details. They separated and did not meet again, until the whole programme had been carried out and the allied army were moving directly upon Yorktown. Washington conducted his troops, and at every point the arrangements of the Quartermaster-General were found completed and ready to meet them.

Nearly twenty-nine years afterwards, General Henry Lee wrote to Joseph Lewis:—

“I must trouble you to inquire, and Colonel Pickering can tell you, What was the mode of march of the allied army from the Hudson to York in Virginia, under Washington? What part came by water, and what by land? Did one division embark at the Head of Elk, and a second at Baltimore? Did the part proceeding by land pass through Baltimore or Frederictown? Who succeeded Scammel as Adjutant-General? And was he Adjutant-General when he was killed near York?”

Joseph Lewis was a member of the House of Representatives in Congress from Virginia. Nicholas Gilman was a Senator from New Hampshire. Colonel Pickering replied to Mr. Lewis's inquiry, April 26th, 1810, thus :—

“ I have delayed an answer to your note, enclosing General Lee's questions, in the hope to obtain full and correct information ; for I was not with the army on its march from the Hudson to York in Virginia. Having made the necessary arrangements for the movement of the troops and the transportation of the stores requisite for the siege, pursuant to the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, and the troops having commenced their march, I went myself to my family, then above the Highlands, at Newburgh, and thence proceeded to Philadelphia, where I was occupied some time about the requisite pecuniary arrangements with the Superintendent of Finance ; so that I did not join the army until a short time before we marched from the neighborhood of Williamsburg to York to commence the siege.

“ Colonel Scammell resigned the office of Adjutant-General some time in 1780. This fact I have from Mr. Gilman, who was his assistant, and joined his successor, General Hand, in the same capacity. Hand was the Adjutant-General with the army at York.

“ Scammell commanded a detachment at York. He was officer of the day when he received his mortal wound, and in the act of reconnoitring to ascertain whether the enemy had (according to appearances) really evacuated some outposts.

“ When General Washington informed me of the destination of the French fleet for the Chesapeake, instead of New York, and gave me orders to provide for the march of the troops to York, he strongly expressed his disappointment. ‘ There is now,’ he said, ‘ no enterprise remaining for the campaign, but to attempt the capture of the army of Cornwallis in Virginia ; and in that I am not sanguine of success.’ ”

In a marginal note to this letter, Colonel Pickering says:—

“ There were about thirty large batteaux transported from the Hudson to the Head of Elk, in which as many troops embarked as they would carry. Mr. Gilman tells me that these were Colonel Olney’s regiment from Rhode Island; and he confirms what was on my mind, that in the mouth of the Potomac the wind was high and the batteaux in extreme danger of foundering.”

Richard Taylor was a Captain in the naval service of the United States during the Revolutionary war. He had rendered valuable service, and was commonly known as Commodore Taylor. He was present at the siege of Yorktown, and thirty-five years afterwards wrote to Colonel Pickering from Frankfort, Kentucky, November, 17th, 1816. An extract from his letter gives information of interest as to that siege and its result in the surrender of Cornwallis, and as to the details of a part he bore in it under the directions of Colonel Pickering.

“ I had the pleasure of a short acquaintance with you at the siege of York, 1781, which I always shall remember with heartfelt gratitude; and the friendly treatment and respect I received from you at that time induces me to inform you in part what I have suffered since, by an obstinate old wound I received in our Revolutionary war. As you, Sir, was Quartermaster-General at the siege of York, I had the honor to be introduced to you by General Nelson, then Governor of Virginia. He asked me how my wound was. He lived in York when I was landed there, and well knew in what manner I got my wound, for I lay in York six months. I mentioned that my wound was not then closed up, but I could go about a little with my crutches. Being anxious in seeing the siege going on, I, with a few others, hired a pilot-boat, and got, the night before, to the landing on James River. Sir, you asked me if I would venture to take charge of eight Bay craft, lay-

ing off the landing, in James River, which were pressed into the service, and go round with them up the Rappahannock, for stores that were deposited at different places in the river. I well remember, Sir, that you, in an expressive manner, mentioned that, should timely supplies not be got there, there was danger of being obliged to raise the siege. That expression roused me. I immediately agreed to take charge of the vessels, as you had so much confidence in me; and, as soon as my instructions, &c., were made out and received, I lost no time in getting on board, for my baggage was in the boat I came there in. I soon made the necessary arrangements, and got all under way. Every thing favored us until we got off the mouth of Rappahannock River. There it fell calm. It being ebb-tide, we anchored. During the calm, I was boarded by a large barge of sixteen or eighteen oars, armed with small arms, besides carrying a small cannon in her bow. I was asked if we had seen, as we came up the Bay that morning, any row-boat or barge; that they had, the night before, a very severe action with one about her build and size. They had several of their men killed and wounded, but expected the enemy met with greater loss. They had put their wounded ashore, got more men, and were then in search of their antagonist. I thought we were very fortunate that we did not meet, or fall in with, any of the enemy's boats. It was said they were doing a great deal of mischief in the Bay at that time; which I expect you recollect was the case, as it was currently spoken of. And, no doubt, the object was to cut off supplies getting to our army. Soon after the gunboat left us, a favorable breeze sprung up. We all got under way. One of our fleet was slow in crowding sail. I did not suspect any ill design; but as soon as the rest of us got in the chops of the Rappahannock River, she bore away, and crowded all sail up the Bay. I did not deem it prudent to leave the other vessels to pursue her, but was more cautious, and kept them ahead of me. At the different deposits on the river I went ashore, made the necessary arrangements, and pushed up to Fredericksburg, delivered your letter to Colonel Richard Young, your deputy there. As soon as the vessels could be loaded, they were pushed down to the rendezvous at Hobbs's

Hole. No time was lost ; for, in less than ten days, we all met, and started from Hobbs's Hole. The next morning after, we got near the mouth of the Rappahannock River. There we came to, and inquired whether any barges had been seen about the mouth of the river the day before. Hearing of none, on the young ebb, and the wind favorable, we got under way, and pushed down the Bay, wishing to get as low down as where the French fleet lay by night. We did more ; for, before ten at night, we all got safe up to Hampton Road, as far as Newport's News ; and the next day we all got up James River, to the place we first departed from. It was three days before Cornwallis surrendered, and it gave me the greatest satisfaction that you and General Nelson were well pleased with the despatch I had made. To convince me of it, you indulged me with a stand, in ten steps of General Washington, where I saw General O'Hara at the head of his troops, marching out to surrender. He halted first on the left, and was about making his apology to the French. The French General pointed him over to General Washington, on the right ; there O'Hara apologized for Cornwallis not coming out ; that he was sick (heart-sick, no doubt)."

The fact that there was no detention on the march from the Hudson to the Head of Elk, but that, on the contrary, the forces reached that point in a day short of that fixed in the programme, demonstrates the foresight, vigilance, and ability, as well as the consummate organization that administered the Quartermaster's department. The requisite supplies met the different columns at every point. Means of transportation were provided, and found in readiness everywhere ; and the batteaux from the Hudson were waiting at the Head of Elk to be launched. The credit of this is undoubtedly chiefly due to Colonel Pickering, who, in fulfilling so perfectly this important part in the conduct of armies, and the manage-

ment of war, justified entirely the high reputation for military talents with which he entered the army.

Volume lvi. of Colonel Pickering's manuscripts, now to be put in possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, consists of original papers, connected with his whole military service, from raising and disciplining his own and other militia companies, in Salem and the vicinity, prior to the Revolutionary war, to its close ; and the final settlement of the accounts and affairs of the Quartermaster-General's department. This volume is of the highest value and interest, containing receipts, orders, original commissions, returns of companies, regiments, brigades, and the whole Continental army, at different periods ; plans of encampment, at West Point and in winter-quarters ; orders of battle ; procuring of forage and supplies ; and, in fact, covering all the details of business in maintaining the army and conducting the war. Nowhere else, probably, can such an inside view be obtained of the processes in operation, from the beginning to the end, to sustain and carry on the conflict. The unwearied cares of the Adjutant, and Quartermaster-General, and his vast labor, are illustrated, and the richest materials presented to the minute explorer and historical student.

Personal courage is, of course, an essential element of a soldier's character, whether in the ranks or in command. As to Colonel Pickering, on this point there never was a question in any one's mind. It was proved by the bold counsels he gave on the field of battle and under the deadliest fire. It was shown in all his actions and utterances. That he was a man of nerve was written on every movement and every expression. His

countenance, frame, and bearing were stamped with the true heroic aspect. The opinion to this effect, universally entertained, stood the sternest and most sensitive test to which the reputation of a military man can be subjected. He refused to fight a duel.

In the previous volume (chap. xxiii. p. 341), an affair of this kind is related. An officer, feeling himself wronged, sent him a challenge. The Colonel stated to the gentlemen who bore it, that in no event whatever would he fight a duel. If he had in any way wronged their friend, he was wholly unconscious of it; and if it were made to appear that he had done so, he would be ready to repair the wrong. He invited an examination of the whole matter, which was had. The result was that he became satisfied that the difficulty had arisen from a misapprehension on his part, which had led to certain expressions of which the gentleman complained. Immediately upon discovering this, he made all the explanatory statements which truth and justice required. Here we see a high military officer, at the head of a department of an army, in a time of war, not only absolutely refusing to fight a duel, but actually making reparation to the aggrieved party, in the form of a retractation. He took this course, and no breath of detraction or insinuation as to his courage arose from any quarter. There could be no greater proof than this, that his character for personal bravery was immovably established through the army and country.

This was not the first instance in which Colonel Pickering refused to fight a duel. Before the Revolution, at a time when his reputation as an officer was as dear to him as ever afterwards, and as important to be pre-

served above suspicion, while taking the lead in raising a military spirit among his fellow-citizens and countrymen generally, organizing companies, drilling that under his own command, and preparing for the publication of a work on the art of war, he became involved in a bitter newspaper controversy with a surgeon of the British army, arising out of the establishment of a small-pox hospital. It is noticed in chapter iii. of the preceding volume. The Doctor, stung to the quick by the pungency of Pickering's pieces, took initiatory steps to call him out; and a challenge, it was given to be understood, was forthcoming. Pickering caused it to be known that he should not accept a challenge. The friends of the Doctor at once began to bring his courage in question; whereupon he published an article in the "Essex Gazette," March 29th, 1774, giving his sentiments on the subject of duelling, in which he denounced it as the product of "Gothic ignorance and brutality." He says of his exasperated antagonist that he "thought it not only possible but very probable that he would demand *dis-honorable* amends." He intimates that he had for some time expected such a step to be taken. "This apprehension," he proceeds to say, "did not restrain my pen, nor cause me to dash a single letter. This barbarous custom," he continues, "still remains the disgrace of the army, and of a few others, alike actuated with a false sense of honor, who dare spurn at Heaven's best gift. If cowardice is my crime, why did my pen move on, with such apprehensions as then took place? Why do I yet continue to write? Do I hide myself from the face of men? Am I not daily to be seen? I value life, and should be loth to lose it by the

hand of an assassin ; but more I value truth. I appeal to those who know me best, and they alone can judge whether my conduct in this, or any other affairs of my life, has been the effect of timidity, of a pliant prudence which accommodates itself to times and circumstances, or of that virtue which knows no fear? *Hic cæstus armaque repono.*"

Upon this the Doctor notified him that he should attack him at sight, and wherever met. Pickering sent back word, that " he would find him as ready to protect his person against an assassin as the community against a quack and impostor."

Here the matter ended. The aspect of Pickering was altogether too formidable to render it expedient for any ordinary man to grapple with him.

These incidents have been mentioned because they demonstrate real courage of the highest order. Colonel Pickering, while in military command and in the heat of war, dared to rise above what has been called "the code of honor," and denounce it in terms it deserves, as an outrage upon common sense, the spirit of civilization, and the very name of religion. His course, in this particular, is most memorable. The example is glorious, and for ever to be held up, especially in view of his position and reputation as a soldier. It entitles his name to be inscribed in unfading and the brightest colors on the roll of the world's heroes.

CHAPTER III.

Pickering and Washington.

1775-1783.

THERE is one point which must be noticed in the biography of Colonel Pickering, and may as well be considered and despatched in this review of his connection with the Revolutionary Army.

At times, especially in the prevalence of violent party animosities, it was brought as a charge against him, that he did not appreciate the character of Washington, but cherished towards him a prejudice, if it did not amount to actual hostility. In the form in which this allegation was usually put, it was wholly unjust and directly opposite to the truth; but, to a certain extent and in one sense, there was some apparent ground for it. He was sometimes noticed to abstain from joining in unqualified and extravagant eulogiums upon Washington. This circumstance was liable to be misinterpreted. It is, however, entirely explicable by considerations honorable to both parties.

Colonel Pickering, either constitutionally in the original frame of his mind, or by his whole training and all his habits of thought, or by both, was an abhorrer of man-worship. This marked his character in every stage and every sphere of his life, and was apparent in his language, actions, and manners. Perhaps in the Revolutionary crisis this repugnance to idolize any

person was entertained with peculiar sensitiveness. It has always been a fatality, attending popular struggles for liberty, that they have ended in the establishment of absolute authority. Successful champions of the cause, particularly if surrounded with the halo-of military glory, have become objects of blind admiration, gratitude, and confidence ; and enthroned as such. It is quite likely that Colonel Pickering seriously apprehended the possibility of such a termination of the War of Independence. How much ground there was for such an apprehension is not, perhaps, fully understood ; and, for that reason, may with propriety be briefly stated.

Washington, more than any other popular chieftain in history, had the qualities that might have led men to confer upon him supreme and unrestrained power. There was a sovereignty in his aspect, stature, and countenance. He was every inch a king. His dignity of carriage, and reserve of manner, inspired reverence ; while the great office he filled, the executive power with which he filled it, and the confidence which his country felt in his fidelity and patriotism, inspired admiration. His well-known personal bravery, and the charmed life he had borne in his early campaigns against French and Indians, invested him with the dazzle of an heroic character, and gave occasion to expressions of the most extravagant nature. The sort of influence he had, from these causes was perhaps regarded with some uneasiness by considerate persons, as liable to become dangerous.

Colonel Pickering took care not to increase this danger, and that no boundless personal adulation towards

any man should be laid at his door. Hence his avoidance of the language of unqualified eulogium when speaking even of Washington, and his disrelish for every thing, in word or deed, that looked like fawning or flattery. It may be that his feelings became morbid on this point ; but they were sincere, genuine, and deep. In a letter to his brother-in-law, Paine Wingate, dated March 12th, 1782, he says : —

“ Since I had the pleasure of seeing you and my sister, you have had a son born, whom you have named GEORGE, as I understand ; but that it was problematical whether you meant thereby to honor that name on this or the other side of the Atlantic. I presume, however, that you value your own dignity, and that of human nature, too highly to idolize either.”

It may appear strange, if not almost ridiculous, that Colonel Pickering's mind should have been so seriously exercised as to have led him to such an expression of repugnance to giving that name to a child, whether in reference to George on the throne of England, or George at the head of the American army.

On the subject of names given to children, Colonel Pickering seems to have had certain decided opinions. Perhaps he inherited them. His father had two sons and seven daughters, all with plain single names, such as were common in those days. The Colonel had eight sons and two daughters. He, like his father, avoided giving any of them the names of persons outside of the family, whether private friends or favorite public characters. Probably they both regarded it as a species of adulation. No man cherished warmer or stronger particular friendships than Colonel Pickering, in the Revolutionary

period and afterwards. He loved Richard Peters with an affection like that of a brother. He was bound to Alexander Hamilton by all military and political sympathies and intimacies, and regarded his public services with admiration. But he did not name a child after either. Nothing could have brought him to what he probably would have felt to be an expression of personal sycophancy. He gave to his first two sons the long-established family names ; to the next five, such good, current, accepted English names as he fancied. When the eighth child was born, having exhausted the common names that suited him, he called him Octavius. So with the two daughters, his last born. He gave them what he considered the most accredited and best English single names.

These facts are mentioned because they illustrate what may be regarded as a singular if not over-sensitive peculiarity of his character, — a repugnance to whatever might look like flattering others or a want of self-respect. They may explain, in part, the language in his letter to his brother-in-law, but not wholly. It has a force and pungency of meaning that demands further explanation. The date of that letter leads to a fuller appreciation of the sentiments covered by the expression. Facts were, at that time, occurring around him which led him to be particularly annoyed by any thing like 'man-worship, especially in his own family. A movement was actually then in agitation to induce Washington to assume absolute power: how far it extended, and who were concerned in it, will never be fully known. If he had not sternly rebuked it, — in other words, if Washington had not been of a grander nature

than other triumphant commanders, — there is no saying what would have been the result. There is reason to believe that the project had a considerable currency in the army. The suggestion was at length made directly to the General, and urged upon his consent, in a letter from an officer of respectable character and rank, who represented himself as conveying the sentiments of many other officers. Washington's answer, dated May 22d, 1782, effectually suppressed the design by the following stern denunciation : —

“ Be assured, Sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature.”

The language of Washington, and all the circumstances known to us relating to this extraordinary affair, indicate that considerable numbers were implicated in it. While this project was actually brewing in the army, it is no wonder that Colonel Pickering's feelings were highly excited against idolizing any man, in any form or shape, and that he wrote as he did to Judge Wingate. That his nervous dislike of naming a child George was owing to the circumstances now described,

is quite evident from the fact that when the war had long been over, the army disbanded, the Constitution of the United States in full operation, and all apprehension of a monarchy had passed away, he named a son of his own, born August 7th, 1789, George, not, of course, in reference to Washington or any other man, but because it was agreeable to his taste and fancy, as in itself a good English name.

Colonel Pickering, during the Revolutionary war, was so apprehensive that mischief might arise from the prevalence of unbounded expressions of blind adulation towards Washington, that every indication of such a tendency attracted his attention, and made an impression on his mind. In a letter to Richard Peters, of January 17th, 1811, he says: —

“ When, in the autumn of 1780, the army was preparing to hut in the wood back of Newburgh, the General being a little advanced of me (in going over the ground selected for the hutment), a countryman fell along-side, and looking forward to the General, said to me, ‘ Now, I suppose he is the greatest man in the world ! ’ *Excessive* admiration is the offspring of ignorance. In reading the history of the Israelites, in my early life, I used to wonder at their proneness to idolatry ; but I have since had occasion to remark, that it is the disposition of the mass of mankind at this day ; the difference is that the former worshipped dead idols, the latter living ones.”

This circumstance, with the sentiments it suggested, had remained on his memory for more than thirty years.

It must be conceded, however, that Colonel Pickering gave other grounds than have now been mentioned for the imputation that he was not an unqualified admirer

of Washington. He frequently used modified language in speaking of him. It is a matter of justice to both parties to know what such qualified expressions meant and amounted to.

An intrigue or cabal, as it was called, had, in the year 1777, been secretly going on in the army, for the purpose of breaking down Washington and putting General Gates in his place. The brilliant success of the latter, in the campaign against Burgoyne, gave it great encouragement, and it continued into the next year, when, like every other attempt against the Commander-in-Chief, it fell to the ground. While it lasted, all sorts of means were resorted to, to give it force and bring it to a head. Slandorous insinuations were everywhere circulated against Washington, and Gates was extolled without measure. He was an officer of great merit and ability, of uncommon accomplishments, and fine personal bearing and aspect. A strong attachment seems to have existed between him and Colonel Pickering, as appears by many interesting letters that passed between them during a long period, extending to the close of Gates's life. But Pickering could never be brought to countenance the attempt to place him above Washington. In a letter to William Pickman of Salem, who had married one of his nieces and was among his most valued correspondents, dated March 24th, 1778, there are the following passages: —

“With regard to General Gates, I live upon the most friendly terms with and respect him; but I am not disposed to elevate any mortal into a God, nor on the other hand to detract from real merit. General Gates possesses many military virtues. He is a man of sense, and has had great expe-

rience ; and much credit is doubtless due to him for the successes of the last campaign."

"The slanders propagated of General Washington are opposed by the general current of the people and army ; and by whatever persons, or for whatever purposes, they were at first raised and spread, the actors must have been disappointed. But to exalt General Gates at General Washington's expense was still more injurious."

"If there be a disinterested patriot in America, 'tis General Washington, and his bravery none can dispute. In point of solid judgment I do not, among all the general officers I have met with, know his superior ; and for attention to business, perhaps he has no equal ; but, like other men, he has his imperfections."

The modifying clause, appended to this substantial and very strong eulogium, if it stood alone might possibly be regarded as a mere truism, applicable to all human beings, from the universal fallibility and limitation of their natures, or added solely from a repugnance to unqualified panegyric of any one whomsoever. But the use of similar expressions elsewhere, relating to Washington, in writing and in conversation, from the connection and tenor of them, seems to require a more specific sense.

All the evidence belonging to the history of Washington, and especially the general reverence for him entertained by Pickering and others, preclude the idea that any defects of personal character, having a shadow of vice, in his habits or life, are referred to. It may, in part, have related to his deportment. His aspect was uniformly grave, and his manners reserved to an extraordinary degree. He was seldom, if ever, known to unbend into familiarity, much less levity of conversation or conduct. It was not *hauteur* or pride, but still a

peculiarity of mien that separated him from others. It did not give offence, but it may have been regretted by those about him. In all likelihood, it was much owing to a serious and ever-present feeling of obligation in the discharge of duty. He realized constantly, and most solemnly, the vast responsibility of his position. No man ever had such a momentous task to perform: to lead the people of a great country to liberty and independence through the vicissitudes of a long war; to preside over its organization into a free republic; to conduct its government in its first stages; and to place it upon a track it has prosperously travelled for a century, and bids fair to travel for ever, regenerating by its example the political life of all nations,—this we see to have been the mission of Washington. He could not adequately have foreseen it. But every thing that proceeded from his pen, all his actions and expressions, show that he was daily and hourly conscious of the incalculable importance of the cause committed and entrusted to his keeping. With this feeling ever in his breast, it is not to be wondered at that, from the moment when he drew his sword at the head of the army of the Revolution until he laid it down, no smile was seen on his countenance. Then, besides, he knew the perils and difficulties of his position better than his subordinates did, and more than it would have been well for them to have known. That restrained communicativeness.

The reserve in which, for these and other reasons, he held himself, must have been sometimes annoying to persons immediately connected with him, particularly to officers of his staff, who were members of his mili-

tary family, — to none, perhaps, more than to Pickering, who was an out-spoken man, not accustomed to suppress his emotions or conceal his thoughts. It is possible that he regarded the trait of Washington's manners that has now been described as an imperfection.

It cannot be denied, however, and the truthfulness of biography requires it to be stated, that Colonel Pickering took exception to the character usually ascribed to Washington beyond what can be covered by the foregoing considerations. But it was on one point only. He entertained through life the opinion that Washington's caution was carried to an extreme, on certain occasions in his military command, and, perhaps, in one or two cases, in his civil administration. An over-anxious desire not to take a false step led, in such instances, to an unfortunate delay of action; and a want of decision was, in consequence, at such times, imputed to him. Colonel Pickering regarded this a defect in the character of Washington as a General, and it is but fair to allow him to give the grounds for this opinion.

In 1811 Richard Peters prepared for publication in the "Memoirs of the Philadelphia Society of Agriculture," "Sketches" of President Washington. He sent the paper, prior to its publication, to Colonel Pickering, with a request that he would revise it, making suggestions for its improvement with a free criticism; so far as it related to the character of Washington, it being perfectly understood between them that, in some respects, their views were different. In reply Colonel Pickering made such suggestions as occurred to him as to the structure of sentences, and the illustration of sentiments, of which the following are specimens: —

“Page 2, line 10: You have a ‘*strong* evidence of the *strength* of his mind;’ perhaps you would substitute *clear* or *striking* for *strong*.

“Same page, lines 3 and 4 from the bottom, ‘*gloomy* nor *saturnine* ;’ the words do not appear so different in their meaning as to admit of a contrast by a disjunctive.

“Page 3, line 7: You mark with inverted commas this passage, in ‘whose hands are the corners of the earth,’ as a Scripture quotation. I thought I had never met with it. A Cruden’s Concordance being within my reach, I have searched and cannot find it. Daniel (chap. v. 23) says to Balshazzar, ‘and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified ;’ and Isaiah (chap. xi. 12) says, the Lord ‘shall gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.’ But, if the words were to be found, I confess I do not see their pertinency on the occasion ; and probably the most of your readers, as wanting in discernment as I, may be of the same opinion. Is it *because* the corners of the earth are in the hands of God, that we receive from him favors and blessings ? and in adversity do we submit to the will of the Omnipotent *because* ‘the strength of the hills is his ?’ It would be natural to acknowledge, in prosperity, the favors and blessings of the omnipotent and benevolent Being, ‘who covereth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies’ (Psalms ciii. 4) ; and to be submissive to *his* will ‘whose judgments are a great deep’ (Psalms xxxvi. 6), but ‘true and righteous altogether’ (Psalms xix. 9).”

After despatching, in this way, amendments verbal or otherwise, to the composition of the “Sketches,” with the “Preface” attached to them, he thus addresses himself to their main subject, — the character of General Washington : —

“The lofty eulogy on ‘Our Admired and Lamented HERO and PATRIOT’ proceeds from your heart, and the full convictions of your mind ; it must therefore stand. Yet I never

did, I never can, consider him under the exalted character of a HERO. His *fortitude* no danger or adverse fortune could shake; but, according to my understanding of the word, eminent military talents must unite with bravery to form the *hero*. To the pure and inflexible PATRIOT let universal praise be given. To his disinterested patriotism and unequalled circumspection our country will for ever be indebted. But, in my view, it has ever appeared too much to call him the 'founder of our empire,' and to ascribe to him its prosperity, its happiness, its freedom and independence. To the excellency of his *virtues* I am not disposed to set any limits. All his views were upright, all his actions just. These, guided by a sound understanding, produced great good. I have often considered, as applicable to General Washington, in his public character, the words of our Saviour to the Jews, 'If any man will *do his will*, he shall know, of the doctrine, whether it be of God.' That the affairs of the United States are now in so untoward, so disastrous a situation, is owing, not to the want of *abilities* in our rulers, but simply to the want of *honesty*. Had Washington been at the helm when Bonaparte resorted to the atrocious system of the Directory in respect to our commerce (for, if their measures be compared, they will be found substantially the same), we should have armed an adequate naval force for its protection. Then, like the Directory, the imperial corsair would have relented, and abandoned his piracies; or an open war would have produced the needful guards and precautions against them; and the millions which rushed into the tiger's mouth, or went within the reach of his paws, would have been saved; and those millions would have been equal to the building and equipping of a powerful navy.

"In former times, I have dropped, incidentally, intimations which manifested to you that my estimate of General Washington's *military talents* fell vastly below yours; but I never told you *facts* on which my estimate was founded, because I perceived that I should speak to unwilling ears. I should not now have even glanced at it but for the conspicuous 'notices' of the 'General' in your Sketches and Preface. Those facts have remained engraven on my memory, and, should I find

time, during the session, perhaps I may place the whole on paper. I know how highly, and justly, you valued Baron Steuben for his distinguished talents, solid as well as polished and amiable. In the last year of the war, in conversing with him on the present subject, I found a perfect coincidence of opinion."

Having said thus much to Judge Peters, Colonel Pickering concluded that it was best to place the "facts on paper" in a subsequent letter to him, from which the following are extracts:—

"I joined the main army in the middle of June, 1777. In less than three months happened the battle of Brandywine. The British army marched to Chad's Ford, and began a cannonade with field-pieces. This was on the 11th of September. The American army was drawn up on the opposite side in order of battle, and from a few small field-pieces returned an ineffectual fire. By nine in the morning, on a hill near the ford, sitting on my horse beside the General, I said to him, 'If the enemy meant to cross at this place, they would not waste their time in this sort of firing: it is intended merely to amuse us; their main body must have marched to cross elsewhere.' I think it was about eleven or twelve o'clock when General Greene was prepared with a division to cross over and attack the enemy at the ford. But (after receiving a variety of imperfect and, I think, contradictory intelligence) it was now ascertained that the main body of the British army had marched up the Brandywine, to cross a number of miles above us. So Greene did not cross, but troops were marched to the right of the river, where, in the afternoon, the action began. The General, when starting from head-quarters, sent me to deliver a verbal order to General Nash, commanding the North Carolina Brigade, which remained at the ford. After delivering it, I fell in with Fitzgerald (one of General Washington's aids), and we rode to the right together. The firing was heavy; and before our arrival Sullivan's division had been defeated and broken. The British, at a distance, were advancing in line. Knox, having with him a number of pieces

of artillery, said to the General, 'Will your Excellency have the artillery drawn up on this rising ground?' — a small swell near by. The question was an idle one, for there was not any, or not a sufficient, body of troops at hand to support them; and I think no answer was given. We retreated a little way, the British continuing to advance, and, with their field-pieces, killing a small number of our men. It was now near sunset. While we halted behind a rail fence, with such of our troops as were in my view, an attack was made by another corps of the enemy on our left, which, it seemed to me, had advanced unseen. Walter Stewart's regiment was there, and briskly engaged. A little before this time, Colonel Mead (another of the General's aids) rode up, and asked the General if he should order up Weedon or Muhlenburg's brigade (I forget which), that, he said, was not engaged. The answer, I believe, was 'Yes.' But soon our retreat became general. I retired by the General's side. We had not gone a mile when he said to me, 'Why, it is a perfect rout.' Daylight was departing, and, according to orders, the troops retreated to Chester. The General and suite arrived there about eleven at night: taking quarters in Withy's tavern. Three or four years ago, I had the curiosity to go upstairs to see the chamber (of which I had a perfect recollection) in which we were sitting when I was called upon by Colonel Harrison, the General's Secretary, to write a letter to Congress, to be sent by express, to inform them of the issue of the battle. I urged Harrison to write it; but he appeared extremely distressed, and put it upon me. I wrote and gave it to the General. With perfect composure, he directed me to add a consolatory hope that another day would give a more fortunate result. You will find this short letter, embracing that additional idea, in one of the volumes of the General's printed letters.

"You will remember that, after the troops were reassembled, east of the Schuylkill, refreshed, and supplied with ammunition, we recrossed that river, and advanced to meet Sir William Howe. On the 16th of September, in the morning, our pickets were attacked. Some troops were detached to support them, and to retard the advance of the enemy. General Washington ordered me to the right of the army, to

assist in forming the order of battle. On my return to the centre, I found the General surrounded by officers, and every thing in suspense. The skirmishing of our advanced troops continued; the firing was brisk, and, by the sound, was approaching. Extremely uneasy, I pressed my horse up to hear what was the subject of the consultation; which I found to be, whether we should fight the enemy on the present ground, or retire to the next range of hills; because, in case of a defeat, it was said we could not carry off our artillery, across the deep and moist valley in our rear.

“ Having been with the army but just three months, and, in that time, not having found it possible to accost the General with ease (although I could converse without difficulty and freely with every other general officer), and being naturally diffident, you will imagine how urgent was the occasion, when I could address him in this language, ‘ Sir, the advancing of the British is manifest by the reports of the musketry. The order of battle is not completed. If we are to fight the enemy on this ground, the troops ought to be immediately arranged. If we are to take the high grounds on the other side of the valley, we ought to march immediately, or the enemy may fall upon us in the midst of our movement. *Pray, Sir, decide.*’ ‘ Let us move,’ was the General’s instant answer. You may see this passage in the 27th page of my letter of April 22d, 1808, to Governor Sullivan (excepting the three emphatical words, which concluded my short but earnest address), of which I sent you a copy; for, after I had written the words ‘ pray, Sir, decide,’ I struck them out, as they so strongly marked the General’s want of decision; hence the printed letter appears without them.

“ It had now begun to rain. We marched to the other side of the valley, and remained under arms all day, soaked with rain. The British army halted. We retired to the Yellow Springs; and our ammunition being all wet in the cartridge boxes, we were for some time obliged to keep aloof from the enemy, which occasioned some night marches. One night, as the army marched upwards, on the eastern side of the Schuylkill, in its rear I fell in with General Greene. We descended the bank of Perkiomy Creek together; and, while our horses

were drinking, I said to him, 'I had once conceived an exalted opinion of General Washington's military talents; but, since I have been with the army, I have seen nothing to increase that opinion.' Greene answered, 'Why, the General does want decision: for my part, I decide in a moment.' I used the word 'increase,' though I meant 'support,' but did not dare to speak it. The fact was, my opinion was exceedingly lowered. For, on the 11th of September, in the time of action, the General appeared, for the most part, rather like a passive spectator than the Commanding General; and on the 16th was manifested the dangerous indecision above stated.

"The next occasion for a display of the talents of a General was at the battle of Germantown. The main body of our army marched down the Great Road. Sullivan's division had been engaged; and, as from that quarter we heard a tremendous fire of musketry, I was apprehensive of a lavish expenditure of ammunition. Just then the same thought struck General Washington; for he directed me to ride to Sullivan, and desire him to save his ammunition. I did so, falling in with him in the road a little below Chew's house. On my return to the General, I found him listening to a discussion of General Knox and some other officers, on the question of summoning the party of the enemy in Chew's house to surrender. For what passed at this time, I will refer you to the twenty-eighth page of the same letter to Governor Sullivan. I opposed the summons, but Knox's opinion prevailed, and a flag was sent; the officer was fired at (as I had predicted), and mortally wounded. The impression on my mind is, that General Washington did not positively decide that the flag should be sent; but it was *suffered* to go.

"In November, having received the re-enforcements of some brigades of Gates's victorious troops, the army took post on the hills at White Marsh. In the beginning of December, General Howe made his 'forward movement' (as he called it) with his army to Chesnut Hill; and, on the third day afterwards (I think it was), some of his troops attacked our advanced guards, which were supported by Morgan's rifle regiment. Our army was drawn up in order of battle, in three lines, on a very commanding hill, the brow of which

was, at first, strengthened by a formidable abatis. But we had continued so long on the ground, and the weather had grown so cold, the soldiers had burnt up all the large wood, so that brush only remained. This was gathered into a row, which, however, would have given very little embarrassment to an enemy. The army being thus formed, and a general battle expected on that ground, General Washington rode along, in the rear of the front line, which was posted on the brow of the hill. It happened that I alone was with him. The firing with the advanced guards and Morgan's corps, in our front, had begun. Some woods concealed them from our view. As we rode along, the General ordered me to speak (which I did) to each officer commanding a regiment, to caution his men not to fire too high, when the enemy should be advancing up the hill. As we proceeded, the firing continuing, the General addressed me in these words precisely, 'I wonder now whether it will be best to re-enforce Morgan or not?' Instantly I answered, 'If a small re-enforcement be sent, they must soon give way; if a large force be detached, a great breach will be made in the line of defence; and this body also will not be able long to maintain their ground; and if they should retreat in disorder, the whole line may be thrown into confusion.' 'That is true,' was the General's reply. After skirmishing with Morgan's corps and the advanced guards, the enemy retired; and Sir William Howe marched back to Philadelphia. Soon afterwards, the American army marched, and huttet at Valley Forge."

The foregoing incidents, narrated in the letters to Judge Peters, written in January, 1811, in explanation of the opinion that Washington had not always the promptness in discerning what the exigency required, or the decision in action, necessary to the character of a great military commander, all occurred while Colonel Pickering was Adjutant-General. He left active service in the field when appointed to the Board of War,

and did not return to it again until as Quarter-Master-General, he accompanied and co-operated with the Commander-in-Chief in the summer of 1781, transferring the army from the Hudson to James River. In one of his letters to Peters is the following:—

“The army being arrived before Yorktown, the General sent for me to accompany him in reconnoitring the enemy’s positions, and the ground suitable for our encampment. At that moment I was engaged in some necessary business of my department, which having soon despatched, I mounted my horse and rode to meet the General. The reconnoitring respected only the American troops; and the space they were to occupy being small, the General, attended by General Knox, with some other officers (perhaps only their aids), had nearly gone over the ground when I joined them. The general positions of the enemy were apparent from the ground to which our troops had marched. As soon as I came up they stopped, and General Knox thus accosted me: ‘The General thinks we ought to move, and encamp nearer to the enemy’s works. What is your opinion?’ I answered instantly, expressing precisely all the following ideas, and, as nearly as it is possible to recollect, in these words: ‘The duties of troops at a siege are severe. Those off duty ought to be so situated as to take their rest in security. We must look for repeated sallies from the enemy, and if any of these are made in great force they will beat the guards of the trenches, and compel them to retreat. If the camp be near, the soldiers will not have time to rouse from sleep and to recollect themselves, before the enemy will be upon them. Shot, from the enemy’s outworks, reach us where we now are. For these reasons I think we are near enough.’ ‘Well, but we must invest the place,’ said General Washington. I presume my countenance must have expressed, in some degree, what I felt; although I endeavored to suppress the signs of astonishment at the simplicity of this remark: while in a moment I rejoined: ‘The object of an investment is to prevent the besieged from receiving succors or making their escape. The

American army now extends so as to command the ground from York River, below the town, round to the morass on our left. Above the town the French army commands the ground from the morass to the river. Duke Lauzun's legion and General Weedon's brigade of Virginia militia are at Gloucester Point, opposite to Yorktown; and Count de Grasse, with his fleet, commands the mouth of the river. No passage is open except through the river; and Lord Cornwallis will not attempt an escape by marching into the heart of the country. So I think, Sir, that the place is completely invested already.' The General made no reply; and the troops encamped on the ground which they then occupied. This was the seventh year of the war; and yet it is certain that the General had not then formed any distinct idea of the investment of a fortified place.

"The capture of Yorktown, together with the army which defended it, closed the General's military operations, and, in effect, terminated the war.

"I am ready to admit, with Mr. Reed, that General Washington sometimes adopted draughts of writings when his own would have been better; and I have repeatedly said that, from an extreme diffidence in himself, he was likewise led, in some cases, to adopt the opinions of others, in whom he placed a confidence, when his own would have been more correct. If this remark should apply to any of mine, now recited, I shall not be mortified. I have stated them precisely as they were uttered, at the instant the occasions called for them.

"Retired in his tent, a commanding officer, contemplating the nature of the duties entrusted to him, may form the plan of a military enterprise; but, to execute it with a prospect of success, he must be able to see, as with a glance of the eye, in every change of circumstances, from the beginning to the end of an action, the movements, and attacks, and defences best adapted to them. He who does not possess this instant discernment — which must, of necessity, be followed by an instantaneous decision — wants the essential characteristic of a General. My opinion of General Washington, in his military character, was formed on what I *saw*.

The *facts* I could not mistake, and the *inference* was unavoidable.

“ Upon the whole, I have no hesitation in saying that General Washington’s talents were much better adapted to the Presidency of the United States than to the command of their armies. To the President very difficult questions could not often occur, and then there was time to deliberate, and opportunity to obtain the best advice. For it was not necessary to confine himself to his cabinet.

“ I do not know that you will thank me for this letter. You long since formed your opinion, and on your own observation (but not in the field): of course you will retain it. In the first newspaper controversy in which I was engaged (near forty years ago), my signature was ‘ A Lover of Truth,’ and I have always desired to make my title to it just. ‘ *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* ’ is a maxim to which I never subscribed; examples to deter, as well as to allure, being useful to mankind. In the present case, it is true, nothing BUT GOOD can be said of the deceased. The error lies in ascribing to him every thing that was GREAT. ‘ *Suum cuique tribuito* ’ is the sacred demand of JUSTICE and of TRUTH.

“ Would to God that Washington were still alive; or that HIS MANTLE had fallen on some ELISHA, whom Providence (controlling the perverseness of the people) had seated in the chair of government: then we should not have fallen from our high estate; then we should have escaped the reproach, so provoking and yet so just, that we are a nation ‘ without just political views, without energy, without honor.’ In this vow to Heaven I am sure we shall agree.”

The foregoing passages from Colonel Pickering’s correspondence, besides being required to present a full and truthful view of the point now under consideration, give inner glimpses of the interesting scenes of the war to which they relate, and of the persons mentioned. They comprehend all the exceptions Colonel Pickering ever took to the character of General Washington, and relate exclusively to him as a military commander.

In determining their weight, it must be borne in mind that the experience of Washington, or of any of his officers, in conflicts with French and Indians, long years before, could have been of little benefit to them in the campaigns of the Revolution, where the field of operations embraced a continent, and the forces and their movements were on so large a scale. Washington had led small detachments of Provincial backwoodsmen in frontier expeditions, and others had seen service, in the ranks or under subordinate commissions in the line, at Lake George, Louisburg, or Quebec, but never in positions that would have at all prepared them for comprehensive strategic operations, or imparted to them the military science necessary to the conduct of campaigns, or the handling of separated, wide-spread, masses of men, in the multiplex evolutions and manœuvres of extended battle-fields. Probably very few among them, besides Pickering, had made the military art a special and elaborate study, in books relating to the subject, describing the movements of large armies in marches, battles, and sieges, and illustrating the elements of tactics, in distinguished instances of modern European warfare. The wonder is that such an army of raw materials, whose officers had so little experience, practice, or previously acquired skill, should have so successfully encountered trained and veteran troops, led by men who had followed war as their profession in life; and that its Commander-in-Chief, a Virginia planter, made so few mistakes.

What Colonel Pickering usually calls a want of "decision," is perhaps described in one instance, with more strict correctness, as "an extreme diffidence of

himself." This trait was manifested in marked expressions of unaffected doubt of his ability to execute the great trust, when he accepted the command of the army; and throughout his whole administration, military and civil, it led him to seek counsel of all competent to give it, in every important emergency. Even when his own judgment was quite clear, he desired to be re-assured by the judgment of others. In the novel, difficult, and momentous combinations of circumstances, often surrounding him, on the field and in the cabinet, he welcomed light and information from other minds. While occasional slowness of action may have led to mischievous results, as in some of the instances mentioned by Colonel Pickering, who can tell what advantages often resulted from his caution? as many fatal disasters have followed sudden decisions by the commanders of armies, as from careful deliberation before acting. If Washington's caution did, once or twice, lose the day, in the long run, and in the end, it saved the cause. Such is already the verdict of history, and it will not be reversed.

It is quite evident that Washington's extreme caution 'in conducting the War of the Revolution, and which brought much censure upon him from some of his subordinates, and among members of Congress, was a constant restraint upon his own nature, which was truly heroic and daring. Occasionally, when his judgment was convinced that the public exigency and the existing opportunity justified it, he made perilous movements, even against the advice and remonstrances of his principal officers. Colonel Pickering mentions his course at the battle of Monmouth as an instance. "His great

caution," says Pickering, "in respect to the enemy, acquired him the name of the American Fabius. From this *governing* policy he is said to have departed, when — following Sir Henry Clinton, on his retreat with the British army from Philadelphia to New York — he "indulged the most anxious desire to close with his antagonist in general action. Opposed to his wishes was the advice of his general officers. To this he for a time yielded; but, as soon as he discovered that the enemy had reached Monmouth Court House, not more than twelve miles from the heights of Middletown, he determined that he should not escape without a blow."*

Colonel Pickering considered this a "departure" from Washington's "usual practice and policy," and cites the opinion of Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth, who, as a commissary and contractor, was acquainted with all the occurrences of the war, and an intelligent person. In conversation with Colonel Pickering, after the war, on the subject of Washington's military character, in which they were found to entertain similar opinions, Wadsworth said, in reference to the battle of Monmouth, that the General appeared, on that occasion, "to act from the impulses of his own mind."

Colonel Pickering seems to have had perhaps an exaggerated estimate of what are called "talents," in speaking of Washington's military character. Such intellectual faculties and habits as lead to rapid and brilliant manifestations, are often thought the necessary elements of greatness; but history and experience prove

* The language here quoted by Pickering, is from Lee's "Memoirs of the War, in the Southern Department." Vol. i., p. 58.

that calm, cautious, conscientious circumspection, a moral power to lay restraint upon the sudden impulses of passion and enthusiasm, — the very qualities he always ascribed pre-eminently to Washington, — are the sources of real wisdom, and, more than genius or learning, constitute true greatness in war or in peace.

Whatever may be thought of the plainness, and even severity, in some passages of Colonel Pickering's strictures, there runs through them, as in all he ever said or wrote about Washington, a full appreciation of his eminent virtues. His language sometimes, in spite of his abhorrence of man-worship, amounts almost to veneration. In a letter to Judge Peters, of January 5, 1811, he says: —

“There is one distinguishing trait in General Washington's character, which you have omitted, *the unequalled dignity of his PRESENCE*, which inspired every one who approached him, with a degree of reverential respect that was not felt in the presence of any other man. This idea was never publicly presented, to my recollection, until after the General's death, and then by one from whom I should least have expected it, Gouverneur Morris, in his funeral oration. Some English poet — I believe Milton — has an expression of this sort, ‘and felt how awful *goodness* is.’ ”

In “memoranda” of incidents and characters in the course of his experience, found among his papers, Colonel Pickering repeats this sentiment: —

“Those who came into Washington's presence approached him with reverence. All such looked at him with profound respect. The dignity of his person, large and manly, increased by a steady, firm, and grave countenance, and an unusual share of reserve, forbidding absolutely all familiarity,

excited no little reverence in his presence, even in the few whose opportunities and frequent official intercourse enabled them to form a correct judgment."

It is one of the innumerable proofs of Washington's real greatness of mind, that he bore no ill-will to those of his officers who occasionally chafed under what they considered his slowness in coming to a decision. Where he was sure of their fidelity to the cause, and to him as its representative, he was not offended by their impatience of delay, but rather pleased with a display of their eagerness to advance even when his prudence and judgment led him to restrain it. At the battle of Brandywine, it has been seen that Colonel Pickering remonstrated against Greene's division being ordered to cross at Chad's Ford to meet the enemy, declaring his conviction that the British cannonade, at that point, was merely a feint to cover a passage of the river at some other ford. The event proved that he was right. The time lost in preparing Greene's troops for the contemplated movement gave the enemy an opportunity to cross in force, a few miles above, without resistance, driving Sullivan's division. In the confusion thus occasioned, another portion crossed at Chad's Ford; thus compelling a general retreat of the American army. At the close of that hard and disastrous day, when the General, with his retiring forces, had reached Chester, about midnight, he gave the most decisive proof of his confidence in and good feeling towards Pickering, in asking him to prepare the official despatch, to be sent to Congress on the occasion. Five days afterwards occurred the scene in which Pickering expressed himself in such unreserved terms, calling upon the General to "decide," on the eve of

another expected general battle. Then, at Germantown, he opposed the measure that Washington had been led to adopt at the Chew house. What he said at Yorktown as to the "investment" of the enemy would have wounded the pride of an ordinary Commander-in-Chief. But the mind of Washington was above resentment towards those who meant well, and frankly uttered what were soon found to be just and wise counsels. The friendship between him and Pickering was never impaired in the least, or for a moment, by the free utterances and unconcealed criticisms of the latter.

As Colonel Pickering held this opinion, as to one particular point in Washington's character as a military commander, he never denied it when brought as an accusation against him. It was his honest sentiment, and he was always ready to stand by it. Whenever the subject was introduced under circumstances that seemed to require his notice, he reaffirmed it; but never without availing himself, at the time, of the opportunity to express, in connection with it, his profound sense of Washington's eminent superiority in all other respects, as a soldier, a patriot, and a man. The reader of what has now been presented will probably discern beneath Colonel Pickering's statements and strictures, pervading and connecting them, as warm and strong an eulogium upon his illustrious chief as can anywhere be found.

While, however, he took the exception, which has been fully stated, to Washington's qualities as a General, and was too honest to disavow it, he chose to exercise his own judgment as to the times and places of expressing it. If an attempt was made, as he thought unseasonably and unnecessarily, to draw him out on the

subject, it failed. On a certain occasion, for instance, at a private circle, but in a mixed company, where the conversation had been running in the direction of Revolutionary reminiscences; and he had been asked his opinion of several prominent characters, and had described some occurrences and scenes of especial interest, a lady put this affirmative question to him: "Colonel Pickering, please give us your views of Washington. Was he not, in all respects, the greatest of Generals?" The Colonel did not feel inclined, under the circumstances, to go into particulars. "Madam," said he, "General Washington was a man of superlative fame." In this answer, at once terse and comprehensive to the utmost extent of which language is capable, while he avoided the point and aim, if not the purpose, of the question, he brought to view in a phrase truly emphatic a thought which the most glowing panegyrist could hardly surpass,—Washington's unapproached renown among men, the world over, and through all time.

In giving this explanation of the modified terms in which Colonel Pickering sometimes spoke of Washington, there is one observation that cannot fail to be suggested in connection with it. As his abhorrence on the ground of truthfulness, as well as taste, of all exaggeration is demonstrated by the facts and citations that have now been presented; and it is shown, to use his own words, that he could never be brought "to elevate any mortal into a god;" his testimony to the real virtues and greatness of his "Commander-in-Chief" is of especial weight and the highest value.

There is one other subject upon which, on a superficial view, some expressions of his might be regarded as

derogatory to the reputation of Washington. They relate to the authorship of documents proceeding from him, under his own name. But here, too, it is found that the facts, as stated by Pickering himself in letters to Peters, of which the following extracts are the substance, greatly heighten interest in the character of Washington : —

“ January 5th, 1811. — All you say in your last letter of General Washington is correct. He did not *take* credit to himself when he was assisted by others ; but the credit was *bestowed* upon him by his fellow-citizens and the world ; and this credit he could not *disclaim* without defeating the *national* object he had in view, in what appeared under his name. The secret was kept *solely* from the *purest patriotism* ; for, of all the men I ever knew, no one was more perfectly free from ostentation.

“ When I first saw the pamphlet of forged letters to Lund, Washington, &c., published in New York during the war (and republished by Bache when the General was President of the United States), I knew by the *style* that the General did not write them : it was the style of a *literary* man.

“ When I first became acquainted with the General (in 1777), his writing was defective in grammar, and even in spelling, owing to the insufficiency of his early education ; of which, however, he gradually got the better in the subsequent years of his life, by the official perusal of some excellent models, particularly those of Hamilton ; by writing with care and patient attention ; and reading numerous, indeed multitudes of, letters to and from his friends and correspondents. This obvious improvement was begun during the war ; but was not equal to the production, in point of style, of the Farewell Circular to the Governors of the States at its close. And yet I supposed his Farewell Address, on quitting the Presidency, was his own composition. Examine the piece, and you will find it remarkable for its simplicity and clearness of expression ; and that the ideas are such as a man of sound understanding and observation, who, during many years, had

been officially connected with, and often heard discussed by the ablest men, the great interests and policy of a nation, would naturally *entertain, collect, and digest*; and such, I imagined at the time, was the source and origin of that address, when I first saw it, in the General's own handwriting. For to you I may say that he communicated to his Secretaries his intention to make the address, and put into the hands of Wolcott, McHenry, and myself the manuscript, with a request that we would examine it, and note any alterations and corrections which we should think best. We did so; but our notes, as well as I recollect, were few, and regarded chiefly the grammar and composition.

"Our friend, Lewis, was the first to inform me, two or three years ago, that since General Hamilton's death the rough-draught of the address had been found among his papers, in Hamilton's own handwriting. Subsequently to this information, in looking over some of my papers for another purpose, I met with one (marked 'French Bribery') which had entirely escaped my memory. It was a memorandum in my own handwriting, and formally signed by me (by way of certificate), of the information given me in the autumn of 1797, and repeated to me, at its date, May 14th, 1798 (by a very respectable man), of the statement made to him by Mr. Letourbe, the French Consul-General, in a tone of complaint, 'that Mr. Adet had foolishly thrown away a great deal of money in bribing Members of Congress,' giving (but without names) some particulars. 'Since then, Letourbe told him that he had paid a sum of money to a person who had procured for him the address of General Washington to the citizens of the United States (on the General's declining to be again a candidate for the Presidency), as originally drawn up by Colonel Hamilton.'

"It may be asked, 'For what end would Adet make this purchase?' Perhaps with a view to publish the fact to the world, in order to diminish or destroy the General's reputation for *greatness* of character, and, consequently, his political influence among his fellow-citizens. But you will make your own reflections: I give you the stated facts.

"January 21, 1811. — As to the public letters bearing his

[Washington's] signature, it is certain that he could not have maintained so extensive a correspondence with his own pen, even if he had possessed the ability and promptness of Hamilton. That he would, sometimes with propriety, observe upon, correct, and add to any draught submitted for his examination and signature, I have no doubt. And yet I do doubt whether many, if any, of the letters in the two printed volumes are his own draught. I judge from extraneous circumstances. I have read very few of them. I have long since determined to read the whole. I hope yet to do it; and I think I am so well acquainted with the General's manner of writing, as to be able to decide which, if any, were his own. I have even reason to believe that not only the *composition*, the *clothing of the ideas*, but the *ideas themselves*, originated generally with the writers; that Hamilton and Harrison, in particular, were scarcely in any degree his *amanuenses*. I remember, when at head-quarters one day, at Valley Forge, Colonel Harrison came down from the General's chamber, with his brows knit, and thus accosted me, 'I wish to the Lord the General would give me the heads, or some idea, of what he would have me write.'

"When President of the United States, the General would condescend to make a fair copy of his speeches to Congress, to deliver to one or both Houses, and yet, I presume, he never draughted one, — though occasionally he might write some of the shorter paragraphs of a general nature. Even Mr. Adams (entirely contrary to my expectation) did not write his own speeches to Congress, though he usually furnished some paragraphs. The General must have had some pride in exhibiting things in his own handwriting. I, this moment, recollect that James Milligan told me that the General's accounts of his expenses during the war were presented to the Treasury department in his own handwriting. The United States, you know, were to defray them. If you were to examine the General's answers to the numerous addresses presented to him at different periods, you would find them of varied composition; each conforming to the character of the writer who happened to be with him. Although the General's private correspondence was doubtless, for the most part,

his own, and extremely acceptable to the persons addressed ; yet, in regard to whatever was destined to meet the public eye, he seems to have been fearful to exhibit his own compositions, relying too much on the judgment of his friends, and sometimes adopted draughts that were exceptionable. Some parts of his private correspondence must have essentially differed from other parts in the style of composition. You mention your own aids to the General in this line. Now, if I had your draughts before me, mingled with the General's to the same persons, nothing would be more easy than to assign to each his own proper offspring. You could neither restrain your *courser*, nor conceal your imagery, nor express your ideas otherwise than in the language of a scholar. The General's compositions would be perfectly plain and didactic, and not always correct.

“ One word more concerning the Farewell Address, on which I have before written to you. I think it was last May, when I was going home from this city, that Mr. King told me that he was then, or had been, in possession of Hamilton's draught of it. Hamilton's good sense would lead him, at that epoch, with peculiar attention, to adapt the style to the character and the occasion ; at the same time, it is to be presumed that the General took unusual pains with that last signal public act of his life. No man had more patient industry ; and I have no doubt that he made a variety of alterations to render it entirely conformable to his own views and feelings ; and hence arose the expediency of the ultimate revision and corrections mentioned in my former letter.”

In the part of Virginia where Washington was born and passed his earliest years, there must have been at that time almost a destitution of established and regular means of education. The planters were too far apart to provide schools for their children, and instruction was left to such persons, more or less fitted for the work, as might be in the family, either members of it or hired for the purpose. In his youth, Washington was much do-

mesticated at Belvoir, on the banks of the Potomac, a few miles below Mount Vernon, the seat of Colonel William Fairfax, who had charge of the wide American domains of his family. He had received his education in England, under the care of an uncle, who was a nobleman; entered the British army quite young; served in Spain, the East and West Indies; was in the expedition against the Island of Providence, of which place he was made Governor; and was Chief-Justice of the Bahama Islands. That climate not suiting him, he came to Salem, in Massachusetts Bay, and was Collector of that port prior to his removal to Virginia. The conversation, and influence upon the mind of Washington, of a man of such a training and experience, must have been of great value. His wife having died in Salem, Fairfax married Deborah Clark, an intelligent lady, belonging to a leading family there. She presided over the household at Belvoir, and Washington ever regarded her with grateful affection. To her aid he may have been much indebted for the rudiments of knowledge; and it is probable that from her, who had been brought up in the thrift of a New England seaport whose people from the first have had a pervading turn towards commerce and trade, he acquired that exactness in accounts for which he was so remarkable. But no general literary interest surrounded his bringing up; and most of his life, before the Revolution, had been spent in out-door occupations. He eminently deserves a place among self-educated men.

Colonel Pickering — whose testimony to the point, as a member of his military family and in subsequent official stations of the closest intimacy, and as a constant corre-

spondent, is perfectly decisive — shows, in the foregoing extracts, with what perseverance and patient industry, in the midst of crowded cares, through the war and his administration of the Government, Washington studied to rectify his style, until it became in perfect harmony with his character, correct, clear, unaffected, dignified, and worthy of his great position.

It further appears from Pickering's statements that, in preparing documents to be issued under his signature, Washington had no other thought than of the public good. He had no ambition to gain credit to himself as a writer. He had no attachment to his own forms of expression or mode of presenting a subject. He had, in short, no pride of authorship. He composed the writing, in hand, according to his own best judgment; but, diffident of his ability and skill in such matters, if the paper was of sufficient importance, he submitted his draught to others for examination, revision, and improvement; and, after it had received the benefit of their suggestions and criticisms, he carefully rewrote it. His habitual love of exactness, and desire to do every thing with propriety, led him to adopt this course, even in much of his personal and private correspondence. When, at any juncture, time was not allowed to write himself, he called upon his Secretaries, or officers of his staff, to compose the paper, in the first instance; and if upon a careful perusal it was found suitable, he adopted it, copying it, if possible, into his own handwriting, and gave it his signature. He thus assumed and identified himself with it, as an act of propriety or courtesy to the party addressed, and to give it authority, without the least idea of there being any literary pretensions whatever about it.

When the subject and purpose of the paper were of great moment, and could be leisurely prepared, he often asked the members of the cabinet and others, each to make a full original draught. Collecting and comparing them, and making such additions, omissions, or variations of any kind as he might deem desirable, he would frame out of them, in his own handwriting, the final document. He took all this pains from that conscientious sense of duty, which governed him in all things. In preparing General Orders for the Army, or Speeches to Congress, or public Addresses, there was no vanity or conceit of his own to be gratified, but a sole desire to have it done, in the best attainable manner, whoever did it, or aided in doing it.

It is entirely an error that has grown up among the people, not entertained at all by Washington or John Adams, to attach importance to the mere authorship of public papers. The only legitimate merit they can have, is clearness, simplicity, and accuracy, in conveying the designed facts and sentiments. If public men should all, and always, act upon this view, and — instead of seeking to gain a sort of literary credit to their speeches and reports, by making them the occasions of mere fine writing, and of a personal display of learning, ornamentation, or flourishes of rhetoric — use language, as Washington did, solely as the means of • conveying truth and knowledge, the affairs of state would feel the benefit.

The statements in Colonel Pickering's letters to Richard Peters written in 1811, taken in connection with what is found in the "Writings" of Washington, and the "Works" of Hamilton, published many years

afterwards, afford, at last, the means required for the solution of the question of the authorship of the Farewell Address of Washington to the people of the United States, in the last year of his Presidency, published, September 17th, 1796

It appears that Colonel Pickering, who had uncommon critical acumen, and was particularly qualified to give an opinion on the point, was strongly convinced that Washington was its author almost wholly; and after it became known that it had been found in Hamilton's handwriting, among the papers of that distinguished person, Pickering still maintained that Washington had incorporated his own labors in the document, to a large extent, making a "variety of alterations to render it conformable to his own views and feelings."

The facts, as now known, are as follows, Washington designed to withdraw from public life at the close of his first Presidential term, and, as the period approached, he formed the purpose of making a "Valedictory Address." He conferred with Madison on the subject, and in a long letter to him, dated May 20th, 1792, enumerated and enlarged upon the topics which, he thought, ought to enter into such an address. In compliance with a wish expressed in the letter, Madison prepared a draught suitable, in his view, to the purpose, and communicated it on the 20th of June, 1792. The state of affairs, and the will of the people, compelled Washington to serve another term; as the expiration of which drew on, he again turned his thoughts to the subject of a Farewell Address. The correspondence with Madison, and the draught then prepared, were before him.

By referring to them, and using the materials supplied by the experience and reflections of the four intermediate years, he put his views into shape.

The following letter is from Hamilton to Washington, May 10th, 1796.

“When last in Philadelphia, you mentioned to me your wish that I should *re-dress* a certain paper which you had prepared. As it is important that a thing of this kind should be done with great care, and much at leisure, touched and retouched, I submit a wish that, as soon as you have given it the *body* you mean it to have, it may be sent to me.”

Washington writing on the 15th of May, says: “I have been favored with your letter of the 10th instant; and enclose (in its rough state) the paper mentioned therein.” He gives Hamilton full power, and expresses his wish that he would exercise it freely, to amend or alter the paper. “Even if you would think it best to throw the *whole* into a different form, let me request, notwithstanding, that my draught may be returned to me (along with yours), with such amendments and corrections, as to render it as perfect as the formation is susceptible of; curtailed, if too verbose; and relieved of all tautology not necessary to enforce the ideas in the original.” “My wish is that the whole may appear in a plain style; and be handed to the public in an honest, unaffected, simple garb.”

Hamilton upon receiving the paper, and examining it, concluded that it was best to leave the draught “untouched and in its fair state,” and to write the whole over with such amendments, alterations, and corrections as he thought were advisable. Having done

this, he arranged a meeting with John Jay, whom Washington had requested him to consult on the occasion, read over to him the draught he had made, and urged him to offer such suggestions as occurred to him. Mr. Jay gave the subject careful attention, and some slight amendments were made, during the interview. On the 30th of July, Hamilton wrote to Washington, enclosing the papers. On the 25th of August, Washington acknowledged their receipt, and expressed his strong approval of Hamilton's draught; but, wishing some further change to be made, he sent it back; "knowing," he says, that "after a writing has been out of sight for some time," it may be better amended "than while it is in hand, I send it in conformity thereto, with a request, however, that you would return it as soon as you have carefully re-examined it." There was considerable correspondence, first and last, between them, as to details; and at its conclusion, Washington drew out the whole document, in his own handwriting, and submitted it to his cabinet, as is stated by Pickering. They made some few suggestions and corrections, and the "Address" received its final form. Hamilton's draught was undoubtedly returned to him, and placed among his papers. A comparison of it with the document as published by Washington, shows that it underwent considerable change after leaving Hamilton's hands.

Such is the history of this celebrated and ever-memorable public paper. Light was reflected upon it, in all the stages of its preparation, from the minds of Madison, Hamilton, Jay, and of the heads of the several departments of the government. When it is considered that it was Washington's own original

conception, that he wrote its heads to Madison, in the first instance, threw it again into form before sending it to Hamilton, added to and altered Hamilton's draught, copied it, over and over again, with his own hand, keeping it under his controlling judgment all along, and revising it with his own pen to the last, it cannot be a question that he is fully entitled to the character of its author. All writers are indebted to others. The value of a work, generally, arises from the extent to which the wisdom and knowledge of previous authorities have contributed to its production. Other authors draw upon the works of the dead. Washington invoked the aid of the living.

As has been stated, from whatever sources aid was contributed in framing them, or however much they may have been revised, it was Washington's custom to have the final draught of any public document, signed by him, in his own handwriting. The inquiry was put to Colonel Pickering, how this fact was ascertained as to the Farewell Address. He replied that "it was incontestably General Washington's handwriting," which "was familiarly known" to him, as he says, "from the year 1777, when I joined the army under his immediate command, to the last year of his life, especially in my official intercourse and correspondence with him for above fifteen years. During different portions of that period, I had also many original letters from the General, arising from my correspondence with him, chiefly in relation to public affairs, yet not official, and which therefore remain with me. The uniformity of General Washington's handwriting is so remarkable, that any one, accustomed to notice various handwrit-

ings, would, after attentively viewing one specimen, be able, without hesitation, to certify the identity of every other."

As to the subject of this chapter generally, the writer may be permitted to say, that from no sources whatever has he derived so much to heighten his opinion of the character of Washington as from the conversations of Colonel Pickering. All who enjoyed his intimacy, and listened to the stories and anecdotes with which his memory was full, and which he related with inimitable accuracy and force of expression, will concur in this statement. Among the revolutionary reminiscences, often heard from his own lips, was the following, which may properly close this inquisition into his real estimate of the Father of our Country.

In one of his letters to Judge Peters, Colonel Pickering says:—

"You mention the General's *equanimity* under the severest embarrassments and disasters. In this I entirely concur. But I once saw him overcome by *great good news*."

He goes on to describe the occasion to Peters; but I prefer to give it as he related it to me, with much more detail.

The cabal in the army against Washington, which has been mentioned in this chapter, embraced many officers, and is understood to have had a considerable support among members of Congress. It never will be known how far it had spread; but, for some time, it had been extending its influence, and had become quite seriously formidable. After the unfortunate battles of Brandywine and Germantown, it acquired much strength, and those engaged in it began to speak out freely, and

were confident of success. The officer who had been generally thought of to supplant Washington, was, as has been stated, Horatio Gates, then in command of the Northern Army. He had seen much service, and was possessed of many attractive qualities.

At the very moment when this intrigue had reached its head, and was about to break out — when, in fact, its managers had begun to speak and act openly — a rumor was found circulating in camp and at head-quarters, that Gates had won a brilliant and decisive victory. It could not be traced to any source, and how it got into currency was never explained. Perhaps it originated among the cabal, the wish alone being father to the thought. Days passed without any intelligence whatever to sustain or contradict it. Of course, a state of intense excitement was created. All were anxiously awaiting information. In the mean time, the sentiment was freely and widely expressed, that, if confirmed, it would be fatal to Washington, his days as Commander-in-Chief be numbered, and Gates carried by an irresistible enthusiasm to the head of the army. The recently and repeatedly defeated General would have to give way to the triumphant one. Washington was fully acquainted with this state of things, and with what it was thought would be the consequence to himself, if the rumor should be found to be true.

At this very crisis, one afternoon, Colonel Pickering was with him for the transaction of business. Colonel William Palfrey, the Paymaster-General of the army, grandfather of John Gorham Palfrey, was also present. The General's quarters were in a house on the Ship-pack road, eighteen or twenty miles from Philadelphia.

After business was despatched, the General inquired as to the rumor, and some conversation was had in reference to it. The road led southwardly, to York in Pennsylvania, where Congress was then in session ; and was open to view from the General's windows, for a considerable distance towards the north. A horseman was seen coming from that direction. They watched his approach with eager interest. Soon it was noticed that he had the appearance of an express-rider. Palfrey was requested to go out and accost him. He did so, and found him bearing a despatch to Congress. Knowing the superscription to be in the handwriting of one of his deputies, Jonathan Trumbull, then at Albany or its neighborhood, he took the document from the express-man to show it to the General. The rider told him the news. Meeting Pickering on his way, he communicated to him the information. They went into the General's room together. Colonel Palfrey drew out the end of an envelope, and then the letter, handing it to the General. Not a word was spoken. Washington unfolded the document, and proceeded to read it aloud, Pickering and Palfrey watching his expression. As he read, his voice began to falter, his articulation became slow, and broke under the intensity of his feelings ; as it became apparent that the letter was announcing the surrender of Burgoyne and his entire army, he could read no more, but passed it to Colonel Palfrey, signifying that he wished him to finish it, which he did, aloud. As he concluded, Washington lifted his countenance and his hands towards Heaven, and was lost in a rapture of adoring gratitude.

He demonstrated a mind incapable of envy or self-

ishness ; transported with joy at a victory the honor of which would be another's, and its effect perhaps fatal to his own personal ascendancy and fame, but which gave earnest of the success of the great cause.

Colonel Pickering used to say, in relating this scene, that the spectacle was truly sublime. He beheld humanity in its noblest grandeur, — a man to whom self was nothing, his country every thing. The image and personification of a Patriot was transfigured before him.

CHAPTER IV.

Colonel Pickering and the Tories of the Revolution.

1775-1783.

PUBLIC controversies, if long continued, especially if they assume the form of a contest of physical force and open war, engender hatred, revenge, and all evil animosities. Such effects were particularly likely to flow from the strifes that resulted in the separation from Great Britain of her American Colonies, embittered as they were through a series of years, first in the realm of argument, and then on fields of battle. Before closing the review of Colonel Pickering's Revolutionary career, the question deserves to be considered, How he was affected by these influences?

It is quite certain, as has been shown, that for years before the war broke out he was under a deep conviction that such an issue was impending. Hence his extraordinary activity and constant efforts to prepare for it, by turning the attention of the people, by all means in his power, to the necessity of putting themselves into a state of readiness for the maintenance of their rights in arms. Hence his laborious drilling of his townsmen and their neighbors, in organized companies, and the preparation, at a great cost of time, patience, and expense, of a thoroughly digested and fully illustrated text-book on the military art, for general use in his own and the other colonies. While he thus foresaw and

was endeavoring to promote a general readiness to meet the conflict, he lamented its necessity, and regarded all the provocations leading to it with profound regret.

The sentiments in which he had been educated, his most cherished associations, professional and personal prospects, all family ties, affections, and interests, led him to be averse to revolutionary convulsions. His young wife was an Englishwoman. His venerated father, although in most traits of his character a Puritan of the sternest stamp, was penetrated to his inmost soul with a loyalty to the throne which could not be eradicated; while feeling that the people of the Colonies had much to complain of, he abhorred the thought of rebellion, and was regarded as a Tory to the last. Some of his sisters lamented the course he took in resisting the power of Great Britain. Many of his dearest friends espoused the royal cause. Through life he had a natural repugance to agitations of all sorts. It may be said with literal truth, that every private consideration, every personal taste and predilection, every domestic and social influence, conspired in holding him back from insurgent measures. But he had studied the subject carefully and thoroughly; and his judgment had become wholly convinced that opposition to the policy of the mother country, and to the measures of its administration, was a duty to which America was then called, and if not resolutely and persistently made, all would be lost. He knew that such opposition, sooner or later, would have to assume the form of forcible resistance; and his purpose was early fixed, at every sacrifice of feeling and interest, to bear his part in it when the day of trial should come.

While he hastened with his regiment to the field, when the conflict in arms had commenced at Lexington and Concord, and was ready to follow up the work of that day by further bold and decisive measures, he regretted that hostilities had occurred and the Rubicon been passed so soon. Giving himself forthwith with such entire devotion to the cause; abandoning every thing else; raising a new regiment, and marching it in the dead of winter, at the darkest hour of the war, to the support of almost a forlorn hope in the Jerseys; standing by the side of Washington in council and in combat at the highest post of his personal staff; and conducting the most arduous, complicated, and momentous department of the army; providing and directing the whole machinery for the maintenance, subsistence, and movements of the troops, — his heart still and ever longed for peace, and he indulged throughout, at every stage of the protracted conflict, an illusive confidence that its end was at hand. His prayer was continually offered up that the horrors and hatreds of the desperate and unnatural strife might speedily cease.

While cherishing these sentiments, it was natural and easy for him to preserve throughout a generous and liberal spirit towards his opponents. He sought to temper belligerent passions by all expressions and offices of charity, kindness, and good-will; and to divest the war, as far as possible, of violence, harshness, and intolerance. His correspondence with Andrew Oliver when the controversy was approaching the point at which the sword was to be drawn, and with friends and acquaintances who had espoused the royal cause, at every stage of the war, show that his feelings remained kindly and

charitable towards them all. He condemned and abhorred mob outrages, and rough usages practised upon the persons of Tories.

This spirit towards those opposed to him on the great issue put to the arbitrament of arms between the Colonies and the mother country is especially illustrated by the course he took in reference to one point of public policy in that crisis. He condemned the legislation adopted in several of the States, resulting in the forcible exile of Tories and the confiscation of their estates, and the indiscriminate and sweeping manner in which these measures were generally carried out. This severity of procedure, while it was deemed, in the judgment of those who controlled the movements of the patriots, to be indispensable, was regretted at the time by others, friends of the Revolutionary cause; and its wisdom and necessity have been open questions ever since. Considerations that now force themselves upon the attention of thinking men are preparing the public mind to come to a decisive judgment on the point. Looking back, after the lapse of a century, when all the passions of that period have passed away, and in the light of subsequent events, by which the consequences of such a policy have become visible,—with a view fully comprehending the lessons taught in that Revolution, and in convulsions that have occurred in other nations,—it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that it was as contrary to wise statesmanship as to humanity. Besides having caused much suffering to individuals, and subjected whole families to ruin, and a considerable portion of the community to severe distress, at the time and ever afterwards, it operated most unfavorably upon the general welfare, and became

the source of evils and mischiefs which still embarrass public affairs, retarding the union, and threatening to prevent permanently the harmony, of the great English race on the North American Continent.

Sequestration of the estates of particular prominent individuals who were known to have encouraged the British ministry in its obnoxious measures, or who early, and without personal provocation, had drawn their swords in the Royal cause, would have left little room for complaint, and been what all might have expected; but beyond this it was not necessary to have gone. In public distractions vengeful penalties should not be inflicted upon great multitudes of persons. Especially ought they not to be imposed upon whole classes who, from an honest difference of opinion or theory, fail to participate in particular demonstrations.

Every one was treated as a public enemy who did not instantly and earnestly take an active part on the popular side. None were suffered to suggest a doubt as to the right and duty of resistance to the mother country, or to hint a misgiving as to the successful results of that resistance. Large numbers in all conditions of life, averse from constitutional temperament to civil tumult, begged to be allowed to stand aloof from the contest in silent inaction. Of this class there was probably an equal number of sympathizers with both sides, who would thus have balanced and neutralized each other. But not being suffered to remain passive and quiet, nearly the whole of them were finally turned against the country. They either left it or were driven out. With as deep interest in their native land as their neighbors, and hearts attached to it by the

strongest ties, merely because they had honest doubts of the wisdom or success of the movement, they were exiled from it for ever.

There was another description of persons who claimed the right, as British born men, of freedom of thought and of speech, and, in the exercise of that right, to express to their neighbors, acquaintances, and fellow-citizens their opinions without molestation. If overruled, and while overruled, by a majority of their countrymen, they claimed the right, usually conceded to a political opposition, to still argue and discuss public measures, without forfeiting their positions as members of the community. Adverse as were their judgment and feelings, at that time, to a war with Great Britain, and continuing freely, but temperately, to utter their sentiments to that effect, they not only remonstrated against being cut off from the body-politic, but insisted, on the contrary, that they should be numbered with their fellow-citizens, and allowed to share their lot; and, if in spite of their dissent, and persistence in dissuading and trying to prevent a rupture with 'the mother country, such an event should take place, they claimed to be reckoned as participants in the common fate, and bear the burdens and liabilities incident to it, to be included and reckoned, equally with others, in all assessments and contributions, imposed or called for by the local authorities, — in a word, to be taxed, counted in levies, pecuniary or personal, and, in all respects, subject to the same treatment as the rest of their countrymen. No heed was given to such claims, petitions, and remonstrances. An inexorable ostracism took effect upon almost every one who did not openly and actively par-

ticipate in the popular movement. Dissenters and doubters were indiscriminately held up to odium, and in great numbers stripped of their estates, and consequently driven from the country.

This procedure against what were called Tories was, it is probable, wholly unnecessary. Their relative proportion to the patriotic party was so small that they could have been kept under restraint. The inevitable influence of local enthusiasm, and of the laws which affect the social condition of men, would have thinned their ranks from day to day. The surrender of Burgoyne, with his army, would have taken away the ground upon which most of them stood, which was an honest apprehension that resistance to Great Britain was impracticable, rash, and sure in its failure to entail upon the Colonies a more abject and hopeless subjugation than ever before to the mother country. From that hour unanimity would have pervaded the entire people. All would have been drawn to the support of the Revolutionary cause, or, if here and there opposition had continued to be shown, it would have been of no account.

The harsh treatment of citizens opposed to, or not prepared for, the Revolution was not only unnecessary, but produced evil effects upon the progress of the contest. The country lost much, at the time, in population, wealth, talent, energy, and enterprise. Families of the highest respectability, men of education, intelligence, and worth, many of them engaged in branches of industry and trade, most promotive of the general prosperity, were either forcibly exiled, or led by actual or threatened violence to fly to other lands. Some went to the Canadas or the West Indies; some to Holland,

France, or other parts of Europe; and many to the mother country. Large numbers — exasperated by what they regarded as personal wrongs, rendered reckless by the confiscation of their property, and feeling themselves wholly absolved from allegiance to a country which, by its own act, had rendered them aliens, and compelled them, as the only possible means of recovering their estates and rights, into the attitude of belligerents — took up arms as British subjects under the royal banner. The question of disputed allegiance — whether to their native Colonies or their native Sovereign — was forcibly settled against the former, and all that was left was to render it to the latter. It must be conceded not only as a right, but as a necessity, of every man, to have a country; and not being suffered to remain Americans, their only alternative was to be Britons.

Regiments, composed entirely of expatriated Tories, called Royal Refugees or Loyal Americans, constituted an efficient portion of the British army. Consisting, for the most part, of superior materials, actuated by a pervading resentment of deeply felt individual ill-usage, and fighting under circumstances that made them desperate, they inflicted more damage, in battles and raids, than all the German mercenaries employed on that side.

The highest element of statesmanship is a forecast of the remote and ultimate consequences of public measures. The expulsion of the Tories has been found to be the greatest and most mischievous political blunder in American history. Permanent, perhaps interminable, injury to the American Republic has resulted. Families and individuals — embracing large numbers, not only of eminent persons of the highest culture and social position, but

every variety of useful industrial pursuits belonging to the middling classes, particularly mechanics and agriculturists — were driven to the Canadian and Eastern British Provinces, raising them at once into formidable, and infusing into them a spirit that has rendered them, to a great extent, unfriendly, neighbors. A considerable portion went to Canada, some of whom filled, for the rest of their days, high stations there, and all imparting naturally a hostile feeling, more or less bitter and enduring, against the United States.

The chief evil, in this point of view, resulting from the expatriating policy of the American Revolutionary governments, is that it may be said to have brought into existence the present Eastern British Provinces. There was already, it is true, within their limits, a scattered and thin population, — consisting, besides descendants of the original French settlers, of New-Englanders drawn there to occupy the fine alluvial lands from which the Acadians had been forcibly transported; of some small Colonies that had emigrated before the Revolution, mostly from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and settled at Woodstock, and a few places lower down on the banks and at the mouth of the River St. John, at Truro, Yarmouth, and near several other of the fine harbors on the Nova Scotia shore, with here and there an emigrant from England, Scotland, or Ireland. If left to themselves, the sympathies of most of these people would have been with the United States.

The flood of exiles poured into that country at the time of the Revolution changed its political character at once. Its people became intensely imbued with loyalty to Great Britain and with the most unfriendly

feelings towards the United States ; and the stamp, then and thus given them, appears to this day. A thorn was planted in our side, which has been felt in every crisis of our country. In the Revolutionary war, the elements of strength and the provocations to hatred imparted by the great mass of refugee Tories, made all attempts to induce them to take the American side, or to subjugate them, fruitless and inglorious. In the war of 1812, the whole power of the United States was thrown upon Canada in vain ; and, at its close, the British flag was floating at many points within the boundaries of the Eastern States.

In the recent struggle for the preservation of the American Union and the life of the Republic, all know what was suffered from the sympathy, in various effective expressions, of those Provinces in behalf of the insurgent States, partly, no doubt, from the ancient grudge, as well as from interested motives. It may always be expected that a sinister influence upon the affairs of the United States will be felt from that quarter whenever engaged in an intestine or foreign war. In a war with Great Britain, the United States will be put to an incalculable disadvantage.

If it had not been for the peopling of the British Provinces by the exile of the Tories to them, consequent upon the sweeping confiscation of their estates, the acknowledgment of American Independence would probably have been made much earlier, and the northern boundaries of the United States much more favorably adjusted. They might have followed the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Northern Ocean.

If the Eastern Provinces had not been so largely

peopled by American exiles, and by that means rendered so considerable ; if they had merely possessed the population prior to the advent of the Tory Refugees, — they would probably have been surrendered as willingly as the Western posts with the vast territories beyond and around them, and have become part and parcel of the United States by the Treaty of Independence. But the English government felt constrained by humanity and honor to provide for the security of those who had sacrificed every thing in their allegiance to it, and to keep extended over them the protecting folds of the flag to which they had proved so true.

If the expulsion of the Tories, with its attendant features and circumstances, thus to any considerable degree strengthened the foundations on which the present British North American Provinces stand, as a permanent nation, with prejudices and traditional sentiments, by the power of which they are and will be prevented from coming into the American Union, it must be lamented and condemned by every wise and patriotic mind on both sides of the border, and by the friends of civilization, human welfare, and peace everywhere.

The entire continent north of the American Republic is, at length, under the name of the Dominion of Canada, consolidated into a distinct, compact nationality. To all intents and purposes, it is to the United States a foreign and rival power. Embracing the coast from Eastport around the Bay of Fundy to Cape Sable, and the whole North Atlantic shore, with adjacent islands, to the Pole ; crossing the continent on a line extending from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, including the navigable part of the great river of that name, and then running through its

centre to the Great Lakes and bisecting them ; terminating at the Pacific, — it comprehends half of North America, and has many of the elements of an empire : impregnable citadels at Halifax and Quebec ; vast and, in many respects, unparalleled resources of internal and agricultural wealth, — peltry, lumber, and mines ; large regions of most productive soil ; and the best fishing grounds of the globe. Its climate, indeed, is for the most part severe, but adapted to produce a hardy and energetic race of men, physically and intellectually. It is to be regarded, notwithstanding the wonderful growth and greatness of the United States, as a formidable power, and arms the Imperial Government of Great Britain, in case of a collision between the two countries, with a fearful advantage. Too large a part of the English-speaking branch of the human family is thus placed in dangerous antagonism to that portion of it within the United States.

The burdens imposed upon the governments on both sides, with a dividing boundary of many thousands of miles, spanning the greatest width of the continent, to be guarded at every point, by sea and land, with navies and armies ; the waste of uncounted millions in maintaining a double floating or stationary revenue service, on all the immeasurable shores of rivers and lakes, and along invisible lines in thinly settled regions, or through vast wildernesses ; the loss incurred by both sides, in consequence of ingenious, daring, organized, and, to a great extent, uncontrollable smuggling, everywhere in operation, — these are among the items that help us to estimate the mischiefs arising from two nationalities where there ought to be, and need be, but one. To

them are to be added annoyances to travellers from espionage and search, from currencies of different values and the thousand ways in which the channels of business and intercourses of life are embarrassed and obstructed; the incubus everywhere pressing upon enterprise, checking the outlay of capital, clogging the transfer and handling of property, personal and real; and liability to retaliatory and overreaching legislation, to misunderstandings, and to war. The conclusion, upon a view of the whole subject, cannot be avoided, that this is a state of things to be deprecated, in the highest degree, and ought not always to be suffered. It is for wise, patriotic, philanthropic, and courageous statesmen at London, Ottawa, and Washington, to bring it to an end.

The hope is cherished, and the vision indulged by thoughtful and benevolent minds, that the problem of an Utopia will at length be solved on this continent; that local government by States, and a union of them all, will make one people over its entire surface; that, under representative institutions, liberty and right will everywhere be secured; and the idea of an undivided, harmonious, and prosperous Republic fully and permanently realized throughout the length and breadth of North America; to be copied, ultimately, in all the other quarters of the world; and the whole human race be rescued from oppressions, and established in peaceful freedom.

From the landing of the first European colonists, at Plymouth and elsewhere, the process towards this grand result seems to have been steadily going on, — subject, of course, to obstructions from ordinary causes,

often thrown for a time from the track, and turned back by the errors, follies, and passions which mislead, more or less, all persons and all societies of men. There has, however, in addition, been one impediment which, in a special manner, has embarrassed the expansion of that political system, — in its great element of self-government suggested in the cabin of the “Mayflower,” — and which the independence on foreign or outside interference, secured to the old thirteen States by the result of the American Revolution, practically established on a large scale. An adverse power has been in constant contact with it, along its confines, checking its growth, — a frequent assailant and a perpetual menace.

The Colonies, in their infancy, were overshadowed by a dark cloud gathering above the wilderness behind them along the whole line of their settlements on the sea-shore. It was constantly bursting upon them, in Indian massacres, the devastation of their fields, and conflagration of their habitations. The power of France, leagued with and inciting aboriginal hostilities, was gradually drawn around them from the Kennebec to the Mississippi. For more than a hundred years the English Colonies were thus threatened with destruction. Defence against this danger consumed their resources, drained their population, burdened them with exhausting taxation, and paralyzed their progressive energies. The conquest of Canada by Great Britain, at last removed this obstacle to their growth, and the continent was open to their occupancy and expansion, without a foreign possessor, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Florida to the Pole.

But in a few short years the evil was strangely renewed,

continues to this day, and threatens to embarrass the relations of government, and impede the free and full development of civilization, prosperity, and harmony, over North America, for indefinite years to come. A foreign power is intrenched, stronger than ever before, along the entire northern boundary of the United States.

No more remarkable results have ever occurred, in the game of nations, than have followed from the cession of Canada to Great Britain, in 1760, and the American Revolution, breaking out fifteen years afterwards. The first event secured to England her American Colonies. The second event, growing out of the first, snatched all those Colonies for ever out of her hands. The people of those Colonies, in 1760, rejoiced with wild enthusiasm that no foreign power was left to interrupt their development or harass their borders ; that the continent was all their own. They came out triumphant from their War of Independence, in 1783, but again to find a foreign power occupying the former possessions of France, extending along the same line from ocean to ocean, ruling over the greatest breadth of the continent ; and this power they had themselves, to a great extent, called into being. They had infused into it a new and stronger life, by driving multitudes of their own citizens into it, thereby giving an impulse that has continued for a century to control and advance it, until it has become almost a sovereignty in itself ; and no man can tell what inconveniences and evils may arise in the future from collisions between two portions of the same race, thus unnecessarily divided against itself.

If this partition of the continent could be obliterated, and all North America come under the folds of one flag,

the glory and beneficence of the Great Republic of the New World would be complete. With no boundary line to guard, and all interior revenue expenses on both sides extinguished ; with no armaments on lake or river, no citadels, fortresses, garrisons, or custom-houses to be maintained ; every impediment of intercourse, traffic, and combined enterprise removed ; one uniform currency and postal system, — what a spectacle of social prosperity would be presented to mankind ! The burdens of government would be almost wholly thrown off ; and perpetual peace, among ourselves and with other nations, the crowning result. Domestic administration and foreign relations would at once be reduced to simplicity, without any permanent obstruction or liability to be disturbed.

This consummation must at last be reached ; and whatever has tended to prevent and delay it will, more and more, as the happy era approaches, be regarded as a great public and national calamity, and condemned as such by all statesmen and philanthropists. The policy of the Revolutionary governments, in the wholesale and violent expatriation of their own people, during the War of Independence, thus imparting life and strength to a foreign power, extending all along the northern and eastern borders of the United States, and infusing into it a spirit of alienation and resentment, will be regarded in its just light, as most unwise, shortsighted, and pernicious.

Colonel Pickering condemned, from the beginning to the end, the extent to which this policy was carried ; the sweeping confiscation of estates, the violent treatment of persons called Tories, and all the angry and

bitter passions that led to such measures and proceedings. As his service during the war was wholly outside of legislative halls, his views on the subject can only be found in looking over his private correspondence, from which it appears that he did all in his power to allay the animosities of the contest, and took constant pains to preserve the relations of personal friendship with those taking opposite sides. One document, however, has been preserved among his papers which presents his sentiments so fully, and in a style so characteristic, that it will be here given in full.

During his whole life an earnest and anxious solicitude for the welfare and honor of the country prompted him to take up his pen, not only in correspondence with prominent persons, but in communications to the public press. Many of his ablest and most elaborate productions of the latter description were anonymous, and their authorship at the time unknown, but are identified by the handwriting and otherwise. In the vast mass of his manuscripts is one signed "Spectator," dated August 8th, 1784, and directed "to the Printer of the New York Packet."

The circumstances that led him to compose and publish this article were as follows. At the close of the war, the head-quarters of his department — which, as has been stated, continued in operation for some years — were at Newburgh. They were removed for a while, after the evacuation of New York, to that city; and, at its final winding up, were at Philadelphia. An association had been formed in New York, called the "Whig Society," of which, during his temporary residence in that city, Colonel Pickering was elected a member. Its

meetings were held every Monday evening. The term "Whig" had then no such import as in subsequent party politics. It embraced the whole people of the country who had espoused the cause of the Revolution, and was used in contradistinction to "Tory," applied to all who had sympathized with the mother country. The design of the society, probably, was to keep alive the patriotic enthusiasm, in a civic form, after the military conflict was over, and to discuss, in that spirit, all public measures and questions, as they might rise from time to time. It was based upon a written agreement, signed by the members who formed it, in which they set forth their object to be "the advancement of literature, agriculture, manufactures, and commerce." It was laid down, however, as a fundamental rule that "no person shall be admitted a member who had not supported a decided and unequivocal character, as a steady patriot, throughout the controversy between these United States and Great Britain."

The existence of such a society was a natural effect of the conflict by which the country had just been convulsed, and of a sense of the new and momentous career upon which the American Republic had entered, when clothed with sovereign power and entire national independence. A profound, even morbid, interest pervaded the popular mind, on all public, especially political, questions. It was everywhere felt that the country had embarked on an untraversed and unknown sea. Hence arose earnest discussions of all topics relating to the general weal; and every conceivable theory and scheme of administration was freely broached and vehemently urged. In the mean while, a nervous apprehension

prevailed — as shown in the “fundamental rule” of the Whig Society, and appearing in others of its regulations — of a danger since found to be entirely fanciful. Public enemies, or foreign powers, getting possession of the government was one of the bugbears of the day. This feeling was wide-spread, shaped the policy of parties, and was not without so far controlling the general mind as to leave its impression on some features of the Constitution of the United States. It was particularly prevalent in New York.

From an early period of the war that city had been in the undisturbed possession of the British, the Royal head-quarters in America, and the great point of communication between all the dominions of that crown on this side of the Atlantic. Large armies and fleets had been constantly stationed there. Great activity and prosperity accrued to its commerce and industry in every form. It followed, as a matter of course, indeed necessarily, that its business interests were to a great extent brought into attachment to that side in the prolonged contest. Those Whigs whose patriotic sensibilities could not brook acquiescence in Royal rule left the place, as they could get away, from time to time. But there were many, undoubtedly, whose hearts were with the Revolutionary cause, to whom removal would have been ruinous, or attended with extreme difficulties, or absolutely impossible, and who remained in reluctant silence. The bulk of active inhabitants became, or had to appear to be, friends of the mother country.

When the war terminated, great numbers of those who had prominently espoused the Loyal cause, embarked with the evacuating British forces, many of them,

like the De Lanceys, Bayards, and Robinsons, going to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and contributing to build up those Provinces. A large portion of the population, however, remained. Those Whigs, who had for long years suffered in silence under, to them, an odious military rule in the city and its neighborhood, at once avowed themselves and rejoiced in their deliverance. Such as had found refuge elsewhere came back, and others flocked in from various quarters. Those classes who had suffered exile from their homes during the war, on account of their adherence to the popular cause, particularly such as had been fighting for liberty and independence, on their return felt more or less irritation and resentment towards persons who had remained in the city, many of whom had been enjoying profitable and intimate relations with the defeated enemies of the country.

This feeling went so far, that it was proposed to expel by law from the country all who were obnoxious to the charge of not having espoused or sympathized with the Patriotic party, during the war. The execution of such a policy, after peace had been fully established, would have been truly barbarous, most injurious to the interests, and fatal to the honor, of the country throughout the civilized world in all future time. But the passions of the people ran so strong in that direction, that it required all the exertions of wise and enlightened leading men to stem the tide and avert the measure. At this crisis Alexander Hamilton came out, with all the power of eloquence and remonstrance, in his celebrated Public Letters signed "Phocion," among the ablest of the writings of that great lawyer and statesman.

The meditated outrage shocked the judgment and sentiments of Timothy Pickering. Residing at the time in New York he witnessed the fanatical violence of the popular passions, and having been a member of the "Whig Society," probably felt particularly called upon to utter his protest; and the following paper was the result.

It would be difficult to find, in the whole range of political controversy, a more forcible argument or a nobler outburst of patriotic fervor. It bears throughout the impress of his style, in diction and thought,—plain, condensed, energetic, and bold. It is an honorable monument of his ability, liberality, and wisdom. It is given entire, as an important item in the public history of the country, and in the biography of its author.

The passage printed in *Italics*, in the first paragraph, shows how deeply he disapproved the course some of the States had pursued during the war, in exiling alleged Tories, and how clearly he foresaw the permanent evils resulting from it.

"To the man who, during our eight years' distressing war, had suffered in the common calamities of his country, the day of peace restored was a day of jubilee. And in him who had no personal resentments to gratify, all the angry passions, which are roused in such tempestuous seasons, at once subsided. To offer an insult to a vanquished enemy appeared dishonorable. To trample on their disappointed and mortified adherents evidenced, not the magnanimity of freemen, but the fierce, unquiet spirit of revenge. To a man of such sentiments the hasty and intemperate measures of the too-zealous Whigs were sources of extreme regret. He felt for their honor, for his own, and for the honor of the nation. *Instances of such intemperance at first appeared in most of the States; and, unfortunately, continued too long*

for our interest and reputation. We published our own shame ; and it has been republished in Europe ; and impartial History will hand it down to posterity. The false steps we have taken we cannot tread back again. The vestiges will remain to the most distant age. But though we cannot wipe out the stain from our national character, yet it is in our power to prevent its receiving a deeper dye, by a repetition or increase of violence and outrage.

“ I am led to make these remarks by the conduct of some of the Whig citizens of your State. They avow themselves to be the only supporters of liberty, — the only men of political integrity among you ; and yet, in their measures with the Tories, they would violate every principle of liberty and national faith. For this inconsistency of Whigs ; for this renunciation of the fundamental principles of the Revolution ; for this disregard to national engagements, — there must exist some powerful motives ; but, in the nature of things, they must be motives which mark the subjects of them with dishonor. They are motives which the Whigs would be ashamed explicitly to acknowledge ; and yet such alone appear to their dispassionate neighbors to regulate their conduct. These motives are but too evidently those of interest, ambition, or revenge ; for the suggestion that the few Tories remaining in the State will endanger its liberties, by their corrupting the body of the people and assuming the reins of government, is manifestly but a pretext to cover the operation of the dangerous passions now mentioned.

“ But whose interest will be promoted by the expulsion of the Tories ? Will the interest of the numerous farmers of the State, who compose the great body of the people, be advanced ? Will the produce of their lands rise in value by a reduction of the numbers and wealth of purchasers ? And can they buy foreign goods cheaper, when the number of importers shall be lessened ? Do your farmers and mechanics think their great market, the city of New York, was formerly too much crowded with inhabitants ? After such multitudes have left it, are the citizens still too numerous ? Will the mechanics and farmers get more for their labor and produce, when the demands for them are still further lessened ?

Whose interests, then, will be advanced, if the violent measures in agitation succeed? I answer, the interest of the few Whigs who can exclusively hold the few lucrative offices in government; and the interest of that small portion of the whole people who are merchants or traders in the city, and who, by obtaining exclusive privileges in trade, will naturally enhance the prices of imported goods, and lower the prices of country produce. And thus, the interests of the community at large are to be sacrificed to the emoluments of a few. The men whom the legislature are urged to expel are confessedly those who can import foreign goods to most advantage, and consequently afford to sell them cheapest, and, at the same time, their extensive demands must raise the price of country produce. That competition in sales and purchases, which alone can render foreign goods cheap, and raise the value of the native commodities, the warm Whigs are imprudently striving to remove.

“From ambition none of the sons of Adam are exempt. That it influences the measures in question cannot be doubted. The history of all the revolutions in the world are, for the most part, but records of the turbulent ambition of the leaders of parties. On one side, they assume the name of Patriots; but, having succeeded, their first acts of government have been stained by an insulting exertion of power, and by every mark of vengeful oppression. The Revolution in America, it was hoped, would exhibit a different example to mankind. The justice of our cause, and the magnanimity with which we maintained it, placed us in the foremost rank of fame. Our conduct excited the admiration, and procured us the esteem, of Europe. But our glory is faded, our credit is sunk, and there needs but the addition of perfidy, the breach of national faith, to complete our career of infamy.

“Who visits your city and hears the speeches, who reads the publications of the warm Whigs, without seeing and lamenting how much they are agitated and inflamed by the unsocial passions of envy and revenge? Many good men are unhappily subject to this fatal influence. That generosity which, in the late contest, was the peculiar boast of Whigs

is now discarded. After viewing, with just abhorrence and indignation, the proud disdain, the insulting triumphs, of Britons over their unfortunate American captives, — now that our enemies are vanquished; when Britain is humbled; when her most numerous bigoted adherents are exiled; and when the residue are submissive to our power, — we disdainfully and insultingly triumph in our turn!

“But, Sir, the violent Whigs in your city are not to cast the die for United America. The *national* interest and honor are not committed to their hands. If their fatal influence in your public councils should disgrace your State, and cause the memory of the present legislature to be handed down to posterity with reproach, yet the great interests of the other States in the Union will prevent their acquiescing in such destructive measures.

“The breach on one side of a single article of the Treaty of Peace gives a right to the other party to annul the whole. Britain stipulated for the protection of a certain class of men, some of whom were their adherents, and others merely resided within those parts of the United States which were under the power of the British arms. The United States have solemnly promised that protection. In entering into the Treaty, they have pledged the *faith* of the *nation* that *no person should suffer any future loss or damage, either in his person, liberty, or property, on account of the part he may have taken in the war*. By the same treaty, the fisheries, — those great nurseries of seamen and sources of wealth, — and an amazing addition of territory, are secured to the United States. Now, is it imagined that the States of New England in particular, to whom the fisheries are essential; without which they cannot pay for the foreign goods which their necessities demand, nor even for the bread which some of them must receive from the Middle States, — is it imagined, I ask, that the States of New England will sit still, regardless of the violence of a sister State, whose palpable infraction of the Treaty shall provoke Great Britain to drive their fishing vessels from the banks? Will they tamely acquiesce in outrages which shall thus rob them of that rich inheritance? Will such a breach of the public faith be submitted to by those other

States who derive particular accessions of land from the Treaty? Will the United States, who acquire such immense additions of territory, the rich fur trade, the navigation of the great river Mississippi and of the lakes,—will they suffer these unbounded prospects of wealth and population to be defeated by a single State? and, with these great interests, yield up their faith and honor as a nation? Will they suffer a breach of the Treaty, and hazard another Indian war,—a war so easy to be excited by our British neighbors, by which the settlement of the new countries will be prevented and the former settlements laid waste? And for what must these sacrifices be made? To advance the interest of a single State? No; a breach of the Treaty will peculiarly injure New York. The British are still in possession of the frontier posts and of the fur trade; and certainly will not yield them up after the State shall have openly violated the Treaty of Peace. For what then do we run such hazards? To please a handful of intemperate Whigs; to advance the interests and ambitious views of some, and to gratify the resentments of all, against a handful of Tories. A noble cause, truly, for setting an empire in a flame!

“But there are men among the warmest Whigs whom once I knew, whom once I honored, and whom I yet esteem: I regret their mistaken zeal. They have done much. They have suffered much. They have received provocations. They have sustained injuries. They have acted and borne these things with fortitude and perseverance; and their country and the world have given them the due tribute of applause. And shall these men, in one desperate moment of revenge, blast their own laurels? Forbid it, Virtue! Forbid it, Heaven! They pride themselves (and the pride is just) in the name of *Whigs*. But is it a leading principle of Whiggism *never to forgive*? Is *generosity* a *virtue*; and shall Whigs spurn it from them? They profess a reverence for religion; but if they never *forgive*, do they hope to be *forgiven*? In which of these characters would they wish their memories to be transmitted to posterity? As *merciless* and *revengeful*, or as *generous* and *humane*? Surely in the latter. For God’s sake, then, let them show some reverence for an exalted pre-

cept of religion and the noblest rule of morality ; let them not dishonor the cause of patriotism ; let them not, by a single action, stain a life of glory ; rather let them *voluntarily* renounce those measures which must ultimately be unsuccessful ; which the neighboring States will never suffer to be executed with impunity ; which the faith of the United States is pledged to prevent ; and which, if not prevented, would despoil us of our dearest interests,—of our fame, of our credit, of our fisheries, of the fur trade, and of our immense acquired territory.

“I will not trouble you, Sir, with a single observation on the construction of the Treaty. It is intelligible to all men who, instead of hunting for evasions, search for its true meaning. But if it were obscure (and the advocates for expelling the Tories have attempted to find or throw mists about it), the reasonings and illustrations of ‘Phocion’ have placed it in so conspicuous a point of light, that he must be blinded by interest or passion, who does not see that the perfect security of the unprosecuted Tories was intended. If ‘Phocion’s’ reasoning be fallacious, why have not his opponents detected his sophistry ? If their cause be the cause of truth and justice, why has it not been supported ? Have truth and justice not one advocate who can write ? The supporters of truth have infinitely the advantage over error and deceit. And yet, while ‘Phocion’s’ letters please and convince, the writings of his opponents scarcely offer the semblance of argument. The performances of the latter will never be reviewed. Like insects in summer, they scarcely live out the day ; but ‘Phocion’s’ letters will be read by posterity.

“SPECTATOR.”

The arguments of “Phocion,” “Spectator,” and others made it so clear that the expulsion of persons from the country by law, *after the war*, on the imputation of their having been Tories, would be an infraction of the Treaty of Peace, that it had to be abandoned ; but the infatuated advocates of the measure shifted their position to one equally indefensible, substituting a proposal which,

if carried out, would have been, if possible, more barbarous, disgraceful, and dangerous. It was thus effectually exposed by "Phocion" in the conclusion of his last "Letter."

"Since writing the foregoing, I have learned that a bill is depending before the House of Assembly for putting various descriptions of persons out of the protection of government. I have too much respect for the wisdom and virtue of that body to suppose a measure of this nature can obtain the sanction of the majority. What is the plain language of the proposal? There are certain persons who are obnoxious to public resentment. The Treaty forbids us to proceed against them in a legal way. Let us, therefore, by an unconstitutional exertion of power, evade the Treaty, however dangerous the precedent to the liberty of the subject, and however derogatory to the honor of the nation. By the Treaty we stipulate that *no person* or *persons* shall *suffer*, on account of the part they may have taken in the war, any damage to person, liberty, or property; and yet, by taking away the protection of government, which they would enjoy under the subsisting laws, we leave them to *suffer* whatever injury to either, the rashness of individuals who are the *subjects* of the State may think proper to inflict.

"The scheme of putting men out of the protection of the law is calculated to transfer the sceptre from the hands of government to those of individuals; it is to arm one part of the community against another; it is to *enact* a civil war. If, unhappily for the State, this plan could succeed, no man can foresee the end of it. But the guardians of the rights of the community will certainly, on mature deliberation, reject it.

"Feeling for the honor of the State, if expulsions must take place, if the Constitution and the faith of the United States must be sacrificed to a supposed political expedience, I had much rather see an open avowal of the principles upon which we acted, than that we should clothe the design with a veil of artifice and disguise, too thin not to be penetrated by the most ordinary eye.

“ If we set out with justice, moderation, liberality, and a scrupulous regard to the Constitution, the government will acquire a spirit and tone productive of permanent blessings to the community. If, on the contrary, the public councils are guided by humor, passion, and prejudice ; if, from resentment to individuals, or a dread of partial inconveniences, the Constitution is slighted or explained away upon every frivolous pretext, the future spirit of government will be feeble, distracted, and arbitrary. The rights of the subject will be the sport of every party vicissitude. There will be no settled rule of conduct, but every thing will fluctuate with the alternate prevalency of contending factions.

“ The world has its eye upon America. The noble struggle we have made in the cause of liberty has occasioned a kind of revolution in human sentiment. The influence of our example has penetrated the gloomy regions of despotism, and has pointed the way to inquiries which may shake it to its deepest foundations.

“ To ripen inquiry into action, it remains for us to justify the Revolution by its fruits.

“ Let those in whose hands it is placed pause for a moment, and contemplate, with an eye of reverence, the vast trust committed to them. Let them retire into their own bosoms, and examine the motives which there prevail. Let them ask themselves this solemn question : Is the sacrifice of a few mistaken or criminal individuals an object worthy of the shifts to which we are reduced to evade the Constitution and the national engagements ? ”

Before Hamilton's essays, signed “ Phocion,” had appeared, or Pickering had written “ Spectator,” — before the British had evacuated New York, — the latter was in the habit of maintaining the same views in warm discussions with his brother-officers.

A passage, in a letter to his brother of September 9th, 1783, quoted in the previous volume (chap. xxxiii. p. 478), denouncing “ the madness of the violent Whigs

in driving Tories from the country, to its great injury, and the no small emolument of the British, who will get Nova Scotia well-peopled," shows how he talked with his friends on the subject, and proves that he appreciated the ultimate effects it would have, enlarging the power and invigorating the growth of the British colonial empire, on the eastern and northern border of the United States.

It is well known that Patrick Henry advocated a similar benignant policy towards Tories, with all the power of his wonderful eloquence, in the Virginia House of Delegates. In the course of his speech, he said that "the personal feelings of a politician ought not to be permitted to enter these walls. The question is a national one. If you would act wisely, nothing should be regarded but the interest of the nation." In reference to fears of any mischiefs from Tories, if permitted to return, he said, "Afraid of *them*? What, Sir, shall *we*, who have laid the proud British *Lion* at our feet, now be afraid of his *whelps*?"

Hamilton and Pickering were bound together through life by the strongest ties of personal and political friendship. They stood side by side in the camp and in the Cabinet of Washington. They share with Henry the glory of having, by their united efforts, endeavored to save the country from the prevalence of a policy fraught with injury to its best and permanent interests, and dishonor to its name.

CHAPTER V.

Colonel Pickering a Merchant in Philadelphia. — Prize Agent. — Private-armed Navy of the Revolution. — Society in Philadelphia. — Colonel Pickering's Enjoyment of it. — His Wife; her Character. — His Views on Education. — Family Correspondence.

1785, 1786.

IN the course of the Revolutionary War, and especially as, from time to time, it seemed to be approaching its close, the thoughts of Colonel Pickering were much exercised as to the pursuits in which it would be best for him to engage when restored to civil life. The preponderance of considerations seemed to be in favor of some form of commercial business. Although without personal experience in mercantile operations and accounts, the general tendencies in that direction of his relatives and connections in his native place, his habits of accuracy and thoroughness in practical affairs and transactions, and the extent to which his duties as Quartermaster-General had given him experience in purchases of all sorts, on a large scale, for army supplies, combined in determining his choice. During the war, particularly in its latter years, he had been led to provide for the residence of his family in Philadelphia or its vicinity, where they had found their principal home, and were living, at the restoration of peace, in circumstances and social relations to which they had become accustomed and attached. Having concluded to enter upon a mercantile occupation, the question arose as to the place in which to establish himself. To remain in Philadelphia was more convenient and

agreeable to himself and family, than to move to any other mart. Although, in the judgment of some, Baltimore was considered preferable, his repugnance to the institution of slavery, and his settled determination never to employ slave labor, were an insurmountable obstacle. It was concluded that his connections in the Eastern States would give him an advantage in establishing an extensive trade operating from Philadelphia, and his mind was accordingly made up in favor of that locality.

He formed a partnership in business with Major Samuel Hodgdon, long a confidential friend, who for some years had served as one of his deputies, and as Commissary-General, under his authority, and in his department. The firm was regularly organized under the name of "Pickering and Hodgdon." He entered this field with his accustomed energy and activity. A large correspondence was instituted with business men in other parts of the country, in Southern ports, and especially in the New England States, and his prospects, as a commission-merchant, were favorable. This sphere of action, and the routine of his labors, afford no particular materials for the biographer. Besides the usual occupations of ordinary mercantile life, there were two special engagements that called for his attention, and occasioned considerable draughts upon his time.

Although the office of Quartermaster-General had been abolished, his own accounts in connection with it closed, and its business for the most part adjusted, some transactions growing out of it remained unsettled. To these he was in no sense a responsible party. They were between individuals who preferred claims, and the

government. But he was naturally applied to for information in reference to them by all concerned. His manuscripts show to what an extent of correspondence, in affording explanation and information, he was subjected, with persons in all parts of the country, in matters of this sort. His letters, in answer to inquiries by the accounting officers of the Treasury, State officials, and private claimants, show that no slight amount of labor was, in this way, continued to be brought upon him, and for which he had no compensation, while engaged in his own mercantile affairs in Philadelphia, and long afterwards.

There was another branch of business which, during the war and for some time subsequent, he had to transact. Although it grew out of a most important and efficient department of the operations of the war, as his connection with it was purely and exclusively a business one, and in the same line as his occupations as a merchant, it may most properly be considered in this chapter of his biography. At such intervals as his official duties, during the war, required his residence at Philadelphia or its neighborhood, and as leisure offered, at the solicitation of friends in the Eastern States, he gave as much attention as he could to the care of their interests there. Much general business was thus, from time to time, thrown into his hands. In this way he was particularly led to act, in many instances, as agent for prize property. His universally appreciated integrity of character, conscientious fidelity to trusts, and prompt attention to correspondence, naturally induced parties to consign such business to him; and he was particularly well qualified to conduct it, from his

experience and knowledge, as to the law and methods of procedure in matters of this kind, acquired while Judge of Admiralty in Massachusetts in the opening years of the Revolution. Vessels captured on the Southern coast would seek, if possible, near ports. New York was constantly in possession of the British. Philadelphia was for much of the time held by the Americans; and prizes were sent in there, as in all respects the most favorable and accessible place for the disposal of them and their cargoes. As the owners had no established system of agencies, and communication was difficult, and as Colonel Pickering was much there, he was expected to take care of such property. In this way he was brought into the business, which continued to occupy him much, in the final disposal of prize vessels and goods, and the settlement of accounts relating to them, while he was a merchant in Philadelphia.

A brief account of the extent and importance of the privateer service of the Revolution may with propriety be given in this connection. The manuscripts of Colonel Pickering shed more light upon it, perhaps, than can be gathered from any other quarter. It is a chapter, in the public history of the country, not yet adequately written, and, to a very considerable extent, constitutes the naval war of the Revolution.

The United States were necessarily without any maritime force at first, and for some time after the contest began. The government of the Confederation was, from its nature, destitute of the unity and energy required in organizing and managing a navy. The territories of the States of which it was composed bordered, more or less, on the ocean, and their inhabitants in the seaports

and along the extended coast had great commercial interests. Their property was largely embarked in vessels engaged in foreign voyages, in trade between the Colonies dependent upon transportation over the sea from point to point, and in the fisheries. They found themselves suddenly exposed to destruction in a war with the most powerful naval empire of the world, and there was but one means of protection left them. The defence of all their maritime interests, and of their harbors and homes, required the people, by independent, spontaneous, and self-organized operations, to set afloat, as quickly as possible, a volunteer navy. Whatever may be said of privateering, under ordinary circumstances, in wars between civilized nations, it was an absolute necessity, on the part of Americans, at that time. It was their only alternative.

The Provincial Congresses, or other contemporaneous colonial and local authorities, commissioned cruisers, thus provided by the exertions and maintained at the cost of private parties. The result was an aggregate naval force of great magnitude and efficiency. The property captured from the enemy not only remunerated the owners of the vessels and paid the officers and seamen for their gallantry and services, but provided for the wants of the people, bringing into port articles of necessity for general consumption, thereby averting from time to time an actual famine that would have quickly brought the contest to a close, and, what was of equally vital importance, supplying the Revolutionary army, often in its extremest straits, with munitions of war of all sorts. The necessities of the times, and the great cause at stake, surely raise this volunteer fleet

far above the reproach cast upon privateering ; and the effects it produced in deciding the conflict place it on the highest level of naval heroism and renown. It did, indeed, do more than any thing else to break the power of the enemy, by compelling the people of the mother country to demand of their government to come to terms with the rebellious Colonies. The commerce of England reeled under the blows given in all seas, and even along her own shores, by the daring, ever-active, everywhere-present American cruisers.

Their prizes were adjudicated upon, in accordance with established forms, by Courts of Admiralty, and they are fully entitled to be considered a regular and legitimate navy. Their achievements ought, if possible, to be recovered from oblivion and embodied in an historical form, summing up their work, illustrating its importance and extent, and giving, in detail, some of the most remarkable incidents of stratagem, battle, and victory. Some of these private armed ships were taken into the Continental service as soon as a regular navy was organized under the authority of the General Congress, and their exploits and career are embraced in our naval histories ; but the far greater number remained under the character of privateers, with no higher commissions than letters of marque, or their equivalent. Their story, which, if brought to light, would be found full of romantic enterprise and bravery and extraordinary prowess and success, is not yet written ; and can only, at present, be gleaned from the files of newspapers of the period, and old letters and accounts. Colonel Pickering's private correspondence with friends in Salem incidentally sheds light on the subject ; and documents

connected with his transactions as prize agent, afford valuable materials to any one who may engage in such a work, as instances and extracts now to be cited will show.

William Pickman, in a letter to Colonel Pickering, dated May 17th, 1779, after mentioning the birth of a son on the second of that month, who became one of the most distinguished merchants and influential public men of Massachusetts (the late Dudley L. Pickman), and touching on other private matters, says: "Our markets remain nearly as when I wrote you last, except bread, which is scarce and high. In March we thought it impossible to reach the next crops without a famine. But the danger of that vanishes. Though we are short, we are not destitute; and I doubt not shall easily save our distance." He then goes on to state that "the brig 'Pallas,' of fourteen four and three pounders and fifty-seven men, had taken a letter-of-marque ship of sixteen six and four pounders and sixty-five men, loaded with flour and dry goods. The brig had one man killed and one wounded, the ship five killed and seventeen wounded." In this letter of Mr. Pickman, and one of the same date from George Williams, a brother-in-law of Colonel Pickering, are the names and armament of private armed vessels, then belonging to Salem and Beverly, from which a list, now to be given, is made out, without counting the brig "Pallas," whose gallant and timely exploit is mentioned by Mr. Pickman. Mr. Williams states that all the vessels mentioned, many of which were full-rigged ships, had been built expressly for the service, in 1778 and 1779. They were constructed with a light draught and a special view to fast sailing. A considerable number of others, then just built, were

waiting to be fitted out and provisioned. He says that he is part owner of three of them, the "Black Prince," "Pickering," and "Lion."

With such a fleet as this, well manned, with brave and skilful officers, supplied by a single port, the aggregate efficiency of the privateer navy of all the States, may to some degree be estimated. It swept the neighboring and even distant seas, dealt destruction upon the mercantile marine of Great Britain everywhere, and drove all the lighter ships of war of the enemy from the Atlantic shores, bidding defiance to their deep, slow-sailing, higher rates; so that the coasting trade of the Colonies was comparatively secure. Mr. Pickman says that only "one out of thirty sail of West India-men," belonging to Newburyport, failed to reach home in safety in the winter of 1778 and 1779.

In one of the letters to be presented in this connection, it appears that the enemy prepared a sloop-of-war expressly for the purpose of coping with the larger class of these privateers. One of them went out to meet her, and, after a gallant fight, captured and brought her into port.

PRIVATEERS OF SALEM AND BEVERLY, MOSTLY OWNED
IN SALEM, MAY, 1779.

PILGRIM.	16 guns, nine pounders.	H. Hill,	<i>Captain.</i>
BLACK PRINCE.	18 guns, six pounders.	N. West,	"
PICKERING.	16 guns, six pounders.	J. Haraden,	"
OLIVER CROMWELL.	16 guns, six pounders.	Simmons,	"
HARLEQUIN.	18 guns, four pounders.	Dennis,	"
HUNTER.	18 guns, four pounders.	N. Browne,	"
FRANKLIN.	18 guns, six pounders.	Robinson,	"
FAME.	14 guns, four pounders.	Hobbs,	"
MONMOUTH.	12 guns, three & four pounders.	J. Ingersoll,	"
ROEBUCK.	12 guns, three pounders.	Gray,	"
SWETT.	12 guns, three & four pounders.	Leach,	"
GREYHOUND.	8 guns, three pounders.	Hammond,	"
CENTPEDE.	6 guns, three pounders.	Pratt,	"

DOLPHIN.	10 swivels.	Carwick, <i>Captain.</i>
TYGER.	8 guns, three pounders.	N. Brookhouse, „
WILD CAT.	12 guns, four pounders.	D. Ropes, „
MACARONI.	14 guns, four pounders.	Patterson, „
LION.	20 guns, six & four pounders.	—————, „
HECTOR.	26 guns, six & three pounders.	Jon. Carnes, „

The following letter from Jonathan Haraden, Commander of one of the vessels above named, the Massachusetts Provincial ship “Pickering,” illustrates the character of that famous naval hero, unsurpassed for courage, skill, and success, in the bold warfare of the Revolution on the seas. It also shows the kind of business thrown upon Colonel Pickering, in the care and management of prize property placed by friends in his hands.

“CAPE HENLOPEN, October 1st, 1779.

“DEAR SIR,

“’Tis with pleasure I tell you that I left the Capes at sundown on Tuesday last, and at sunrise on Wednesday morning, I discovered two sails to the windward. The winds being light, I hove out two drags to keep my ship from going ahead, and made all the sail I could, as though I was running from them. They both gave chase, and, at five P.M., they got nigh enough to discover that I was a cruising vessel. They both hove about, and hauled their wind. I immediately hove about, after them. They crowded all the sail they could, and rowed at the same time. At sundown the wind breezed up a little, and, as night came on, I kept sight of them with my night-glass. At eight P.M., they parted. One stood to the northward, and the other to the southward. I kept in chase of the largest, and, at nine P.M., she hove about (being to the windward). As she passed me, I hailed her, but had no answer. Then I gave her a broadside, but without any effect that I could perceive. Then I tacked ship, and gave her another broadside and hailed her. She answered, from New York. I ordered her to haul down the colors, which they obeyed instantly (very peaceable people, like the ‘Hope’), though they had fourteen six and four pounders and thirty-

eight men. She proves to be the 'Royal George' cutter, a letter of marque, out of New York, last Tuesday morning, bound to the West Indies, and was in company with a sloop of eight carriage guns from the same place. She being clean, and a fast sailer, got off clear while I was in chase of the cutter. The cutter bears a great name for sailing, but now is very foul. My being so near the Capes, thought best to see her in safe, and put the prisoners on shore. I propose to sail again to-day, if possible. The cutter I have directed to your care, and beg that you would dispose of her to the best advantage, — have sent three negroes in her, which you will please to sell. There is a negro man on board the 'Confederacy,' which was taken out of the jail without my knowledge. He's a servant of the Lieutenant of the 'Pomona.' If you think you can get him again without much trouble and expense, as he's my property, should be glad that you would, and sell him with the others. By a paper on board my ship I find that there are five or six cannon in the brigantine 'Hope's' hold as ballast. I would beg that you'd get Mr. Cotton to search for them, and, if found, would have you sell them also. The Captain of the cutter says that there were twenty-five sail of ships and transports at the Hook, bound upon some secret expedition, supposed to the northward; and, last Sunday morning, they were all ordered in again.

"Sir, I have drawn an order on you for five hundred dollars, for the men that have come up in the cutter, and the pilot you will pay also. I thought it more advantageous to hire them here than to send my own men in her, by reason of their expenses in going home. My compliments to your lady.

"I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"JONATHAN HARADEN.

"TO COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING, Philadelphia."

This letter is particularly worthy of remark, as it gives evidence of the chivalrous courage and ingenious sagacity of Haraden, which indeed characterized the peculiar naval service of that time. It is evident that the enemy was of much superior force, his two vessels

carrying six more guns. Yet the American cruiser took infinite pains to get into a fight with them, resorting to elaborate stratagem, and pursuing them in a night chase of four hours. By spreading all possible canvas, at the same time throwing out his drags astern, Haraden made them think that his vessel was a slow-sailing merchantman endeavoring to escape. They were thus entirely thrown off their guard, and confident of an unresisting capture. They steadily overhauled, nearly reaching, him before they discovered their mistake. Thus surprised, they fell into a panic, and put about. Shipping his drags, he, also, instantly put about. His superior sailing qualities were then revealed. As he gained upon them, instead of coming to action with him, as they ought, they ran as for life, separated, and left him to choose his prize. The contempt and scarcely concealed disappointment he felt at not having had a harder fight on the occasion is an amusing instance of the high tone to which the spirit of the contest had wrought up the heroism of the volunteer navy of the Revolution.

In this single cruise Haraden captured more than a hundred cannon. It appears by a valuable article in the "New-England Historical and Genealogical Register," vol. xxvi., page 24, by Captain George Henry Preble, of the United States Navy, that in this same cruise the "Pickering" had at least nine engagements with ships of war, — among them the "Pomona" and "Hope," referred to in the foregoing letter, — some of them of superior force, and that she was victorious in each instance. One of these achievements was quite extraordinary, — the "Golden Eagle," of much heavier armament, having struck to her, was re-

captured by an English ship of war, the "Achilles," which put a crew into her, under command of a Lieutenant. Not long afterwards, Haraden fell in with them in company. He attacked them both, and, after a fight of several hours, drove off the "Achilles," and retook the "Golden Eagle," with her British prize crew.

The letter also sheds light upon the manner in which slaves were treated at that time, even by those engaged in a war for liberty. When taken from the enemy, they were regarded no otherwise than prize property, and sold back into slavery as such. Haraden evidently had not turned his thoughts to the subject. Not so with Pickering. It was a subject he had always had deep at heart. His views prevented him from settling, as he often had inducements to do, in States where the institution existed. He never would own a slave, and refused to avail himself of that species of service at all times, except on conditions looking to and securing the emancipation of the person employed. He often put himself and family to great inconvenience on this account. As Prize Agent, he was undoubtedly much embarrassed in dealing with this kind of property; but acting merely as a factor, in connection with admiralty cases, and under the then law and usage, he had sometimes to discharge what must have been a very painful duty.

The following letter, given entire, besides other matters, some of private and others of general interest, shows the value of the privateer service, and mentions a particular exploit that ought to be rescued from oblivion:—

"SALEM, July 4th, 1778.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I wrote you a letter, a few days before the death of our father, by Millet, in which I informed you of his being very ill. I did not imagine, at that time, he was so near his end.

I have not wrote you before, since that event, at which you may perhaps wonder; but brother Williams told me he had written to you, informing you of the loss of our father. Millet was also delayed by some means or other, so that I knew you would have knowledge of it as soon as I could inform you by my writing. I have been confined at home ever since by taking care of the business of his estate. He has left a will in which, after giving our sisters certain legacies, to the amount of between three and four hundred pounds sterling, he gives to you one-third of his real estate. The remainder of his estate he has given to me, out of which I am to pay debts, &c., and to allow my mother such a sum annually for her support, as we may agree on. He has made me sole executor. His death I think was very easy. He had been growing feeble for so long a time, that the struggle with death was short. However, I am not a judge in that matter, for, through the kindness of Heaven, few deaths have called on our family to mourn as near relations, and this is the only death which has been in the house, except sister Clark's little girl, since the marriage of our father and mother.

"I have received your letter of the 12th of June, in which you draw a consequence from my accepting the Speaker's chair, that our father was better. I believe I have in a former letter told you the reason, which was, that I had been chosen to several important trusts which I had declined, and though I thought I had reason enough still to refuse any place which would keep me much from home, yet others would not be made to believe but that I could attend after the death of my father as well as members in common. They willingly gave leave for me to be with him in his last moments. At the time of election our friends all expected that our father's days could be but few more. Isaac Perkins was hired by my father for the season, and is as trusty as any man who could be hired. Perhaps, while he lives with us, I may be able to attend the General Court, except in hay time.

"I thank you for the enclosed papers, and for the intelligence you give me in your letter. As I have engaged Powers and Willis to send you their paper, you will see all the news worth mentioning, that is, all of a public nature, and brother Williams, I believe, can and does give all in the

privateering way. Several valuable prizes have been brought in here lately ; many articles suitable for the army, which have chiefly been bought up by the proper agents for that purpose, as I am informed.

“ Captain Thompson has behaved nobly, in taking the ship of twenty guns sent out to take him, of which the Boston papers will inform you as soon as this letter.

“ Your son, I was going to write *little son*, but he is too big for that epithet, is brave and hearty. And our friends are all, I think, very well, except mother, who is severely attacked with the rheumatism, and has been indeed suffering with it many months past.

“ The season hitherto has promised fair for plentiful harvests ; very good crops of hay are already fixed, as there has been no want of rain, except for a short time a few weeks ago. At this time the earth is well watered, at least about us. The last and present weeks have been very hot, and, as there were frequent showers, the Indian-corn has grown amazingly.

“ Many insects make their appearance at this time, chiefly of the worm kind ; such brown worms as, about six years ago, made their appearance, are now plenty in some spots. I have made inquiries, and have not yet heard of any except in this town. I think, as their time of life, at least before they undergo some mutation of form, is short, they will not do much damage. They were first discovered last Sabbath, which is earlier than they appeared in 1772. Their course is from North to South, or nearly so, as has I believe been their course at every appearance of them in times past.

“ Brother Dodge has called a son, born a few months since, by the name of Pickering. Brother Wingate has a son lately born, whom he calls George. Dr. Orne’s son is named Joseph. I think of nothing else worth writing, and the same may be said of half I have written.

“ I never had correspondence with the members of Congress. Some of them I highly esteem, and they have my sincere regard. Farewell.

“ JOHN PICKERING.

“ T. PICKERING.”

“As your last letter to me was directed, it would have been considered by the House as a public letter to them, but addressed to me because I am Speaker, and would have been opened by them if it had been delivered to any member, or fell in their way. So, direct to me, not as Speaker, unless it is intended for the House. — J. P.”

Among the items of domestic interest in the foregoing letter, one is particularly observable. Colonel Pickering's father was married to Mary, daughter of Colonel Joshua Wingate of Hampton, N. H., November 21st, 1728, and died June 7th, 1778. His married life covered forty-nine years, six months, and ten days. He had two sons and seven daughters, all born in the same house, all of whom survived him, and not a single death, except of a little grandchild, had occurred, during all that period, within a few months of half a century, in that household or beneath that roof.

Colonel Pickering occupied, while residing at this epoch of his life in Philadelphia, an unobtrusive tenement, exemplifying in its aspect, conditions, and usages, the frugality, industry, regard to neatness and substantial comfort, and the easy hospitality, which ever controlled his domestic arrangements. Every thing in his personal habits and family order was in harmony with the plain simplicity that marked his methods of transacting business, his public accounts, and his official demeanor; and which in fact constituted the peculiar element of his eminence in life, the distinguishing value of his services in the high stations he occupied, and the aim and charm of his style as a writer, a public speaker, and in conversation.

All the while he was maintaining the most delightful and elevated social connections. Philadelphia has

ever been pre-eminent for the culture in science, literature, and the arts, of its leading circles ; and their influence has pervaded the whole community, and given tone to the manners and spirit of the people. Colonel Pickering was fully appreciated there. Besides the reputation he brought with him, and the prominent part he had acted in the Revolutionary crisis, his company was found to be a great acquisition in all associations, public or private. His conversational powers were of a high order. As a narrator of events, or a delineator of persons, he had no superior. Careful and close observation, and a copious memory of details, qualified him to relate with great distinctness whatever had occurred in the varied scenes of his interesting experience. The habits of simplicity of diction and expression, to which he had trained himself in the use of language, produced their legitimate results in his familiar speech and ordinary intercourse with friends and acquaintances. He had studied very thoroughly and minutely the meaning and force of words. In lexicography and grammar he had few equals even among scholars. Exactness in the use of language was combined with great freedom, ease, and fluency ; without redundance, exaggeration, or extravagance, his sentences were full of energy and animation. The strong views he took of men and things very often led to emphatic and forcible expressions, which remained vivid in the memories of those who heard them, and some have become traditional and historical. While his taste and his truthfulness restrained him, upon principle, from overstatement, the earnestness and boldness of his nature occasionally gave the character of vehemence to his utterances. This tendency he endeavored to resist.

The warmth of his temperament often occasioned an amusing conflict with his rules of good taste. Discoursing, in a company of friends, on the subject of rhetorical delivery, and denouncing too much action, while uttering the words, "I abhor gesticulation," his long and muscular arm incontinently and unconsciously swept a semicircle around him!

Colonel Pickering always avoided one fault to which good talkers are much exposed. He never engrossed conversation, but sought that it should be shared in by all. He drew others out, and left room for each one to bear his part. But, as a general thing, so natural, clear, distinct, and dramatic was his manner, — his finely tuned voice and expressive countenance giving such a pleasing and lively effect to his instructive conversation, — that all present, with one consent, were disposed to leave as much of the field to him as he could be induced to occupy.

During Colonel Pickering's residence, as a merchant, in Philadelphia, many of the first men of the day were his personal intimates. Richard Peters and Benjamin Rush were dear friends as well as neighbors. David Ritzenhouse and Tench Coxe were his constant associates. All the leading persons and families of that city, and distinguished visitors from other parts of the country and foreign lands sought his acquaintance. He particularly enjoyed the society of estimable and enlightened Quakers who dwelt in the city of Brotherly Love. There were many points of attraction between them, in plainness of attire and speech, and sympathy on most philanthropic subjects, particularly that of slavery. Upon the whole, this was one of the happiest periods of his

life; and if his business had satisfied his desires. or, in other words — for his views in reference to property were always most moderate, — if it had met the needs of his family, he would have passed there an honored and beneficent life.

As he became relieved from attention to matters growing out of public office and the care of property entrusted to his management, he spent the leisure allowed by the intervals of business in an active interest in the general advancement of society. Although he had wholly withdrawn to private life, his usefulness was felt in various extended spheres. As an early member and Secretary of the Philadelphia Society for the Improvement of Agriculture, his correspondence was large, reaching to other States. The efficiency of that Society was augmented by his labors, and its membership increased, including prominent persons engaged in agriculture, in all parts of the country. The leading statesmen of the day sought his counsels in great public measures. The founders of academies, cultivators of farms, and writers of books, solicited and obtained his advice. In this way his services to the general welfare, as well as to the particular friends who sought them, were constant and invaluable. His literary correspondence was chiefly with persons interested in education. He sought to bring into notice improved text-books for schools, such as Noah Webster's rudimental and elementary works on spelling, grammar, and reading, the marvellous and universal circulation of which did much to give such remarkable uniformity to the use of language throughout this country. He also brought into favorable notice, in the Middle and Southern States, Pike's and Walsh's arithmetic.

During the period of his residence in Philadelphia, as a partner in business with Major Hodgdon, he enjoyed more fully, perhaps, than at any other time of his life the comforts and pleasures of a settled home, of which he had been bereft since the opening of the Revolutionary war. Soon after this, his family was temporarily broken up, and when gathered again, his boys were more or less away, either at school, — during their attendance at which they resided with relatives and friends, — or at college, or in the employments of mature life. But now all that he had were with him, and the circle was complete. The company of his “charming” niece, Lydia Williams, shed light upon his household. On her return to Salem, the void was supplied by the arrival of his wife’s sister, whose presence contributed, for years afterwards, to the welfare and happiness of his family. In a letter to Judge Wingate, dated at Philadelphia, May 3d, 1785, he says: —

“We have an addition to our family of my wife’s sister. She arrived here from London on the 22d ultimo. They had not seen each other since 1765. All remembrance of each other was lost. My wife recognizes in her sister the features of their mother, and by that alone could fix the relation. I esteem her as a very worthy character, and am persuaded we shall find her company as agreeable as, I see, it will be useful; for she is extremely industrious, and so neat that she would please even the most exact of my sisters. My wife and her sister resemble each other more in their dispositions than in their faces and persons. Miss White’s countenance is agreeable, and her air is vivacious; but her face has been injured by the small-pox, being much more strongly marked than my wife. She is shorter than Mrs. Pickering by two and a half or three inches, but not diminutively small. N. B.—This description of *person* is particularly for the information of my sister Wingate.”

The historian, describing the elder Cato, says "Family life always formed with him the central object of existence ; it was better, he thought, to be a good husband than a great Senator." Colonel Pickering was often called the American Cato ; and in no point did he more resemble his noble Roman prototype than in this. His correspondence and other manuscripts show that he never allowed any other engagements whatever to prevent a constant and devoted care for his own family. While with them, he spared no vigilance and labor in providing for their daily and ordinary convenience, enjoyment, and improvement. While absent, and involved in the duties of camp, cabinet, or senate, his letters of direction and instruction reached them constantly and frequently. His faithful and considerate guardianship descended to the minutest particulars, as well as to the highest lessons of morality and religion.

He was singularly happy in the most important voluntary relation that man or woman can form. His married life equalled in its felicity all that the imagination can depict or the heart desire. His wife was one of the most amiable and lovely of women, — of the sweetest disposition and most excellent judgment. They were often separated by unavoidable circumstances, particularly during his military service, and subsequently while he was discharging high trusts in the several branches of the national government ; but the letters that passed between them have been preserved in singularity. Many volumes containing them are in the sacred custody of their descendants. Some are mixed with his miscellaneous manuscripts. Those used in this biography have been drawn from both sources. They

show the entire confidence he always felt in her good sense and fidelity to every duty. He communicated to her, as to an enlightened friend, all his plans, purposes, and engagements, and, in his suggestions as to the oversight of affairs and of the family in his absence, is seen a constant and careful consideration of circumstances in detail that prove his heart and thoughts to have been ever with her at home.

During the war of the Revolution, this delicate young woman, with her infant children, in compliance with his wishes and arrangements, cheerfully encountered the fatigues and perils of long journeys, the inconveniences of a camp, and frequent removals of her residence, as head-quarters were changed; and, after the subsequent brief domestic repose while living at Philadelphia, he was led, as will shortly be seen, into a wilderness, she heroically shared with him its privations, sufferings, and terrors; acquiescing, without a murmur or a question, in all the hardships thus brought upon her, and developing a firmness and energy of character equal to the most trying occasions. She wholly subordinated her will and judgment to his, thus acquiring a controlling influence over him which it was the happiness and pride of his life to recognize. In this, the legitimate way, she wielded the high power her sex can and ought to exercise. Her gentle, and his strong and resolute, spirit; her mildness of demeanor and manners, and his bold, decisive, and emphatic expressions and deportment, not only constituted a singularly remarkable contrast, but wrought a most beautiful harmony.

They lived together, as man and wife, more than fifty-two years. Their early was a constant love. He

treated her to the last with the same tender courtesy and lively affection as when she was a bride. His letters to her are ever warm and endearing, replete with expressions of fondness, and glowing with sentiments of the deepest attachment and devotion. The following will serve as specimens. Similar passages are found, in all his letters to her, in every stage of their lives. Writing from Philadelphia, March 7th, 1782, he says: —

“I received, my dearest, your letter by the return of Black, the express. This is the fourth from you. I will no more charge you with inattention, nor begin an account (which I threatened) that will surely be overbalanced by your goodness. My wishes grow daily more impatient for the time to arrive when we shall meet, no more to part; when distance of place and the slow communications of letters shall not for a moment retard our endearing correspondence. This happy period, I hope, is not far off. God forbid that more than one campaign should intervene.”

In another letter, dated Philadelphia, April 2d, 1782, he says: —

“I beg you, my dearest, not to anticipate any difficulties in your own journey hither. I trust there will be none. Surely I will not leave you to go alone. I will not hazard another night of watching to you, among dreary woods and mountains: I will be your companion and safeguard. I will make the journey easy, and not only easy but agreeable. I will bring you on only as fast as you and our little ones can bear it. The season then will be delightful. 'Twill then be Nature's prime. The whole creation, animate and inanimate, will then conspire to please you.”

In the preceding volume, page 393, a prayer is given, composed by Colonel Pickering for the joint use of himself and wife, communicated to her by him in a

letter dated Sunday evening, January 12th, 1783. Besides extracts from the letter, there printed, the following are the introductory paragraphs:—

“By what names of endearment, my dear Beckey, shall I address thee? My faithful friend! My soft and sweet companion! My pride! My present joy! My future consolation! My fond, my affectionate wife! How shall I love thee sufficiently? How shall I find words to express that love? Dear art thou to me as my own life. More tenderly than ever do I love thee. Faultless as I have found thee, how can I choose but love thee? Judge, then, how painful is my separation from thee! Business, indeed, all day excludes thee; but night, still night, all kind and tranquil as thy gentle spirit, restores thee to my memory; and, indulging reflection, I am overwhelmed with tenderness. But why should I disturb thy tranquillity? Why rouse all thy sensibilities? Yet the tender disquietudes of love are not unpleasing; you will therefore excuse me.

“I have read over what I have written. What would a stranger call it? Would he pronounce it weakness? or the extravagant doting of a young lover? But what has a stranger to do with it? You alone are to read it; and you will receive it with all the grateful warmth of strong, inviolable love. If, indulging the feelings of my own fond heart, I fail not to excite the like tenderness in yours, I shall be doubly pleased. Our happiness, to be complete, must be mutual. Live, then, my dear Beckey! Heaven guard thy health! and, ah, do thou thyself respect it! Let exercise mingle with thy industry. Thy tender frame will not endure fatigue. Heaven preserve *me* also! for thy sake, and for the sweet pledges of our mutual love!”

The forty-five years which subsequently passed over their happy and sacred union, proved that what he wrote was not “the extravagant doting of a *young lover*.” The ardor of his affection, and his respect for her virtues, never abated.

She continued to the close of life, which occurred in her seventy-fifth year, most lovely in her bearing and aspect, her fair complexion still adorned with a beautiful bloom. Her husband recorded, in a family notebook, an account of her illness and death, concluding with this testimony to her worth : —

“A spirit more gentle, more innocent, more pure, never perhaps appeared in the female form.”

Their last separation was brief. She died on the 14th of August, 1828 ; he on the 29th of January, 1829.

While residing in Philadelphia, at this period of his life, his children were under his own eye. Almost always afterwards they were more or less separated. He had, therefore, the opportunity of making the earliest and deepest impressions on their minds and characters ; and no father ever improved it more faithfully or effectually. He was the educator of his family, and either by direct instruction and influence, or, as they grew older and passed from under his immediate oversight, by letters to them, or those having them in charge, he watched over their culture and training, with constant vigilance and enlightened care.

He sent his son John, then a little over nine years of age, to Salem, with a letter dated, “Philadelphia, May 27th, 1786, as follows : —

“DEAR BROTHER,

“I am happy to learn by my last letters from Salem, that you are so far recovered as to go below. I pray God that your health may be perfectly restored.

“Believing it would be a gratification to you to see my eldest son, — your namesake, — and a pleasure to all the fam-

ily ; thinking also that it would be a service to John, by weaning him of that bashfulness and timidity which are really a disadvantage to him, and that his health would be benefited by the voyage and short relaxation from study, I was induced to part with him for a season. On the same grounds his mother also readily consented to the measure. I am under no solicitude about any thing but his education, which your indisposition will prevent your attending to. I have only to request that he may be sent to the best school in Salem ; but have no wish that he should learn a word of Greek or Latin. I am confirmed in my opinion, formed years ago, that it is of no advantage to a boy, though intended for a college education, to learn any *dead* language, till he is eleven or twelve years old. But he may learn to read well ; to write a fair hand ; read and remember so much of geography as will enable him to understand the form of the globe, and the relative situations of oceans, continents, kingdoms, cities, &c. ; acquire a considerable stock of historical knowledge, so far as *facts* are the object ; and learn a just pronunciation of any *living* language. The first rules in arithmetic may also be taught him. All these things a boy of common understanding may learn by the time he is twelve years old. I am greatly mistaken in John Pickering if, under proper masters, he could not acquire an *accurate* knowledge of all the branches of learning above stated, by twelve years of age. I think you will find him uncommonly docile and attentive. . . .

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

The foregoing letter is of intrinsic value, having an important bearing upon questions much discussed, as to the proper stage, for the acquisition of knowledge of languages, in the course of education. John Pickering became, particularly in that department, one of the most accomplished scholars this country has produced. In the classic, Oriental, European, and American aboriginal tongues. he has had but few equals.

In the previous volume of this biography (page 531), a letter of Colonel Pickering is referred to, which gives his views of school instruction at considerable length. From its carefully digested contents, and the completeness of the scheme it proposes, it is worthy of being presented entire, in connection with that just cited to his brother, written a month afterwards. It was elicited by a movement, in which the Colonel and some others were engaged, to establish a school in Philadelphia on an improved plan; and its suggestions were designed to be considered by those interested in the project, and especially by a gentleman who, on the recommendation of Noah Webster, was expected to take charge of the institution. After speaking of the proposed school, and signifying his readiness to place some of his own boys in it, he develops his views as follows:—

“The common mode of education appears to me, in some instances, absurd, in every instance tedious, and not half as useful as another mode, which seems so obvious that I wonder it has not been generally introduced. But we are wedded to old habits, and loath to part with them, however unprofitable.

“To what purpose is it to compel boys designed for the counting-house, the sea, or mechanics, whose education ceases when they leave school, to learn Greek and Latin? And yet few parents who can afford it, have thought their sons properly educated, unless they have *wasted* three, four, or half a dozen years about those languages, which in one year afterwards they will be sure to forget. And what a sad misappropriation of half a dozen years (from eight to fourteen), in which boys intended for the university acquire a smattering of Greek and Latin, to the neglect of almost every other branch of learning! Perhaps I may have formerly thrown out to you my opinion on this subject. I will now

be more particular ; and beg the favor of your thoughts on the plan, with the necessary corrections and amendments of it.

“ At four years of age a boy may begin to learn to read ; till then, or even till five, I would choose he should be running about and playing in the open air, to acquire a degree of hardiness and firmness of constitution. Between six and seven he may begin to write. At eight or nine he may learn so much of geography as to understand, by means of an artificial globe, the form and motion of the earth, and the magnitude and relative situations of oceans, seas, continents, islands, kingdoms, &c., on its surface ; the numbers of the inhabitants of different states, whether governed by kings or assemblies ; the most striking features in the character of any people, their singular customs, dress, a few general ideas of their religion, the most remarkable events in their history, curiosities, general education (and on this article the master will naturally lead his scholars to observe the consequences of neglect or attention, the immense advantages of learning, and miseries of ignorance), and any other matter which may be likely to engage the minds of children. By this time he will have learned to read with a degree of propriety, observing the stops, and varying the voice. At the same age he may begin the English grammar. At nine or ten let him begin to *read* French, to *acquire a just pronunciation*, while the organs of speech are yet capable of forming *any* sound ; learning no more of the grammar than just to distinguish the parts of speech, in order to determine the different pronunciation of similar combinations of letters. When he has acquired such a knowledge of the English Grammar as will enable him to parse any word, and resolve any common sentence he meets with, let him learn the French Grammar, for the same purpose. The general principles of both being alike, the diversities of the French from the English Grammar will be readily noticed and remembered. At eleven, his perceptions will be so clear he may learn arithmetic, without being confounded with the combination of numbers. These may be his studies till he is twelve years old. During the last three years (from nine to twelve) he will be set to read

entertaining stories, fables, and select passages from the best English classics, in prose and verse, together with so much of history as may be found in Guthrie's Geographical Grammar. This reading, while it increases his knowledge, ought to perfect him in a just delivery.

“Having laid up this store of various knowledge, with what amazing advantage would a boy, at twelve, commence learning the Latin language? After pursuing that one year, he might begin with the Greek. And by fourteen, I would hazard any thing that he should, together with that general knowledge before described, be more a master of Latin and Greek, than a boy of equal genius, who, in the ordinary way, has been delving at almost nothing else, from eight to fourteen. But, that the boy may better understand the Latin and Greek authors, he should, during the last three months of his first course, be taught the Ancient Geography. Occasional application, in that short time, will enable him to understand enough of it for the purpose here mentioned, and he will readily learn the ancient names of those countries and places with whose names in modern geography he is already acquainted. I should wish a boy to continue at school till fifteen; which will enable him to enter a college with great advantage, and a better prospect of becoming a learned man. In his last year at school he should be taught book-keeping. If any other living language, besides French, is to be learned, the pronunciation of it should be acquired, as soon as that of the French is fixed.

“Thus much for the education of boys intended for the university. There is a much more numerous class, whose formal instruction will cease, when they leave school, at fourteen or fifteen years old. These are to be merchants, masters of vessels, mechanics of the first class, and substantial farmers. These ought never to be harassed with Greek and Latin. To the future merchant and mariner the French language will be peculiarly useful, and it should accordingly be taught. To them, and to the mechanic and husbandman, a correct knowledge of their own tongue is important, and it should be learned grammatically. In one word, the same course of studies may be prescribed to this whole class, as to the

former, until they reach twelve years; bating the French, or other foreign language, to the husbandman and mechanic. At twelve, instead of Greek and Latin, this class will be employed in perfecting themselves in the English language, in writing every hand necessary for the man of business, in geography, in arithmetic; and from the latter they will advance to the most useful branches of the mathematics, — as navigation, surveying, mensuration, gauging, — and in the last year learn book-keeping. To all of them, too, a knowledge of the principles of mechanics would be highly useful. During the same period (from twelve to fourteen or fifteen), they will be improving in reading; and, in doing this, get acquainted with history, and a few of the best English classics in prose and verse. If the school were kept in the country, or where land enough for the purpose could be obtained, these boys, as well as the class intended for the university, might be taught the principles and practice of husbandry and gardening. This would be a useful acquisition, and serve as an amusement and proper exercise without interrupting their other studies.

“Now is it not very possible for boys of common understanding to acquire, under good masters, all the branches of useful knowledge before enumerated, by the time they arrive at fourteen or fifteen years of age? And if it is, why not attempt it? Nay, will it not be very practicable, for the second class (as they will be excluded from the benefits of the university), to learn the general principles of government, in its various forms, and the history and theory of commerce? And, if to complete this course of education, the lads did not commence their apprenticeships till fifteen, would not their superior knowledge render their six years’ services, till twenty-one, more valuable to their masters than seven in the ordinary way?

“This is the plan of education I wish to see universally adopted; but, especially in every great town, the vast utility of an English school, in the extent here described, must be apparent to every one; and ’tis such a school, to be opened immediately in this city, which I had in contemplation in my conversation with Mr. Webster.”

The ideas on education, expressed in detail in the foregoing letters, are worthy of preservation in themselves, as showing how deeply he had studied the subject; but they assume a value greater than mere ideas, as such, can have, from their connection with the very interesting practical experiment to which they were in the process of application at the time. It may be taken for granted that young John Pickering when, at nine years of age, he was sent to his uncle, had not been put at all to the study of Latin or Greek. But, under his father's care over his training, which had been very particular, not interrupted even by absence, he had become remarkably proficient in the other ordinary juvenile studies, particularly that of his own language. After reaching Salem, considerable time was spent in visiting his relations; and, when placed at school, it is not to be doubted that due regard was paid to his father's wishes, and that it was not until a considerable time later than was then, or is now, usual, that he entered, in earnest, upon the study of any dead or foreign language. In the mean while, as a reader, speaker, and writer of his own tongue, he had mastered all its elements of spelling, construction, accentuation, emphasis, and cadence. His young mind had comprehended the philosophy of its grammar; and his ear and taste appreciated its elegance, capacities, and force. The art of penmanship (the neglect of which as a part of school training is quite too common) was also fully acquired. When thus furnished, with faculties vigorously maturing, he entered, at the school in Salem, upon the rudiments of Latin and Greek, his progress became quite observable. Notwithstanding many early interruptions

and disadvantages, from the irregular and broken course of life of his family in his early boyhood, — changing its residence as head-quarters changed, the children almost always separated from the father, and not unfrequently scattered among strangers, — John entered Harvard College, and took his degree with high honor before he was nineteen years of age, having already established that pre-eminence which he retained through life as a classical scholar. His attainments in Latin and Greek literature, his labors as a lexicographer, and his extensive conversance, as has been stated, with European and Oriental languages, and those of the American aboriginal tribes and nations, have placed him in the very first rank of linguists in his age and country. His case must be considered in its connection with his father's views, and adds, in a just measure, to their weight. The correspondence of Colonel Pickering with the founder of Phillips Academy at Andover, described in the foregoing volume, and with various other parties, on different occasions, in this and the subsequent volumes of his biography, will entitle him, in the judgment of every reader, to be reckoned among the best thinkers on the subject of education.

There are different opinions at this day as to the best period of school education for instruction in dead or foreign languages. It may be maintained, for instance, in opposition to, or modification of, the views of Colonel Pickering, that if any departments of learning are to be pursued before the faculties are matured to a full understanding of their import, it had better be dead or foreign languages, than other more practical and useful branches. It may be said that in some of the earliest years of child-

hood, which it is important to bring and keep under the restraints and discipline of the school-room, but few things can be thoroughly and accurately comprehended ; that the only or chief faculty that can then be safely and elaborately wrought upon is the memory, which, after all, throughout life, is an imperial faculty in its efficiency and value ; that language, whether Latin, Greek, or any other, is to be got by memory ; and that, in fact, in the universal primal school of nature, every child acquires, before all and beyond all, its own vernacular by memory and imitation, when calculation and ratiocination have hardly begun to be experienced. Arguments like these, and others referring to the incalculably valuable effects of accustoming the young and dawning mind to the contemplation of the perfect models presented by classic sentences and forms of words, may still be insisted on ; but that there is, notwithstanding, great force in such views as Colonel Pickering urged, will probably be more and more generally acknowledged as the advancing phases of modern society give an ever-increasing preponderance in the estimation of mankind to what is useful, practical, and adequate to the multi-form emergencies of life.

Colonel Pickering's sister Mary was married to the Rev. Dudley Leavitt, of Salem, who died, February 7th, 1762. Some years afterwards, she became the second wife of Nathaniel Peaselee Sargeant, Chief-Justice of the Court of Massachusetts, and member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. Elizabeth, her daughter by her first husband, was married to William Pickman. A letter relating to her death is given Vol. i.; page 385.

Judge Sargeant, in a letter to Colonel Pickering, dated

at Springfield, September 29th, 1783, expresses himself as follows, alluding, in the course of it, to the death of Mrs. Pickman : —

“ It is with inexpressible pleasure that I can inform you that your sister has, this summer, enjoyed more health than at any time since my acquaintance with her. I trust now she bids fair to be my companion for my life as well as her own. I really feel that life without her would not be worth my asking for. However pleasing the prospect, it always strikes a damp on my spirits, when I think how suddenly the prospects of Doctor Orne and Mr. Pickman have been blasted. Salem, that your sister once thought a kind of paradise on earth, has now almost lost its charms. We have not visited there since November last. I expect it will affect her when we go to Salem Court, but not so much as it would have done sooner. She feels trouble for a long time, but this last” [the death of her daughter, Mrs. Pickman] “ was peculiarly distressing. She certainly lost one of the most amiable children I ever knew. I loved her as one of my own children, and feel her loss as severely. It gives me a melancholy pleasure to speak, to think, to write of her.”

Paine Wingate is often mentioned in this Biography. His wife, Eunice, was a sister of Colonel Pickering. He was son of the Rev. Paine Wingate, of Amesbury, in Massachusetts, was born May 14th, 1739, graduated at Harvard College in 1759, and became a minister of the gospel. He subsequently bore a large share in public affairs, was a Judge of the Superior Court of New-Hampshire, a delegate from that State in the Old Congress, one of its Senators in the first Congress of the United States, and afterwards a member of the National House of Representatives. He died, May 7th, 1838. For fifteen years, he was the only one living of his college class, and for several years headed the list of the

surviving members of that institution. His wife lived beyond a century, having been born, April 19th, 1742, and dying January 7th, 1843.

Between Judge Wingate and Colonel Pickering, the closest intimacy and most affectionate friendship always existed. The following is one of the letters that passed between them : —

“STRATHAM, January 1st, 1784.

“DEAR SIR,

“By a letter I received from you, dated last April, I find that mine by Colonel Dearborn to you has miscarried. When, or by what conveyance, this will reach you, I am uncertain, as my situation is such that I know of no opportunity of sending. You will perceive by this that I still live at Stratham. I principally employ myself in the concerns of husbandry, and, I believe, enjoy as much contentment and happiness as is common to humanity. I have five children: two of them you once knew; my two next are sons, named George and John, which names I think I gave them purely because they were agreeable, and convenient to pronounce while they were young, and would be short for them to use when grown up. My youngest child is a daughter, near nine months old, called Elizabeth. You know enough of our family not to doubt of my fondness for my children, nor to think it strange that I take singular pleasure in my two boys, one of which is three and the other almost five years old. We have a good share of health in general, and particularly at this time. My farm affords me something more than a bare subsistence. I have an agreeable neighborhood and extensive acquaintance. I have leisure to look upon the affairs of public life; and if I would practise the low arts of some, I suppose I might have a share in them: perhaps I may some time or other without. It is likely you will think it trifling to give you thus so long a detail of my domestic concerns, but I have nothing at present more interesting to inform you of.

“In your last letter but one, you made some inquiries respecting Siberia wheat. It is probable that, since that time, you have heard the fate of it. That grain (as is common to most if not all exotics) has become naturalized to the climate,

and subject to the disasters of other wheat. I suppose that a new importation of that kind of seed might answer the purpose again as it did heretofore. I have nothing new in husbandry to communicate. I go on pretty much in the old track of culture. By attention, neatness, and labor, the products of a farm may be greatly increased; but I do not expect, by any kind of magic, to cause the earth to bring forth plentifully and durably.

“I join with you in welcoming the happy event of peace, and hope the Independency of the United States will conduce to an increased freedom and happiness. It would have been an addition to my satisfaction to have had the return of peace returned you and family to your native town and connections again. You are not insensible that you have a large share in the esteem and affections of your relations and friends; and I cannot think but that you might have gratified them, and, at the same time, have provided for yourself in your return. But I do not pretend to be judge of your prospects in business at Philadelphia. I would not attempt to dissuade you from your interest, so far as is consistent with your own ease and enjoyment of life, and that extensive usefulness which you owe to society. You may depend upon every cheerful aid in my power in whatever situation you are, and my most ardent wishes will ever attend you of prosperity and happiness. I rejoice in your domestic welfare, the restored health of your wife, and increase of children. I hope that you will find leisure to visit us, with your family, before long, although you should think it best to fix your stated residence at the southward. In the mean time, any opportunity of writing to me of your welfare, if you will embrace it, it will afford me the greatest pleasure.

“I desire that my affectionate regard to your wife and children may be mentioned, and be assured that with particular esteem and friendship, I am yours, &c.,

“PAINE WINGATE.

“MR. TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

The correspondence between Colonel Pickering and his relatives and particular friends in Massachusetts will be further drawn upon in subsequent chapters.

His tastes and characteristics did not, perhaps, wholly adapt him to a life of trade. It was soon found to be an unfortunate time to institute a commercial enterprise. The expenses of living were great in a large city, the profits of his business did not afford encouragement, and he was compelled to look about for some other sphere of industry. His life as a merchant comprehended a very short period.

Agriculture, from his earliest to his latest day, was the object of his predominant attachment; and nothing but a sense of duty to his country, and the prospective necessities of his family, had been able to reconcile him to a postponement of it to other employments. As his prospects of success in the mercantile line became less promising, his heart and imagination turned back, more and more, to the life of a farmer. In 1786 the circumstances of his situation compelled him to take decisive steps in some direction. He was then over forty years of age, and a large young family was growing up entirely dependent upon his exertions. He had brought no property out of the responsible and laborious public positions he had occupied; and his compensation, as Quartermaster-General, had ceased with the abolition of that office the year before.

It has been stated that, about the close of the Revolutionary war, he entered into correspondence with Ethan Allen and others, in reference to the purchase of lands in Vermont. But the serious conflict of jurisdiction prevailing then between the State of New York and claimants — Green Mountain boys, as they were called — under New Hampshire grants, prevented the further prosecution of this purpose. Still harboring

the thought, to which his fancy became continually drawn, of spending the remainder of his days in subduing the wilderness and becoming the proprietor of new and fertile fields, he bought, in company with others, large tracts of wild western lands, situated in that part of Virginia now Kentucky, and also some on the then outskirts of settlement in Pennsylvania. He was prevented, however, from entering upon them by the state of his family, and the remaining business, public and private, that held him to Philadelphia; but especially by the earnest entreaties of his relatives and friends in Massachusetts, to come back and fix his abode there. They remonstrated against his abandoning them, and carrying his young family into the depths of a wilderness. Indeed, at one time he so far yielded as to conclude it to be his duty to give up all his cherished visions of opening a settlement in the West for himself and children, and return to his former occupations in his native town and State.

The trying fluctuations of purpose to which his mind was thus subjected, and the incidents and considerations that finally determined his choice and fixed his resolution to look elsewhere than in Massachusetts for scenes of enterprise and industry in which to exercise his energies, find a congenial field for the labors of his life, and secure the means of supporting his family, will appear in the next chapter.

In the mean while circumstances were shaping his destiny to an experience that constitutes the most remarkable episode of his life, distinguishing it from that of any of his eminent contemporaries, and imparting to it an element of romance, not elsewhere to be found in modern biographies.

4 CHAPTER VI.

He resolves to become a Pennsylvania Farmer. — Alarming Sickness, and remarkable Recovery, of his Brother. — The Rebellion in Massachusetts. — Appointed to civil Offices in the County of Luzerne.

1785-1786.

ON the conclusion of his military service, the family and friends of Colonel Pickering in Massachusetts were earnest in soliciting him to return and make his residence with them, and continued to urge him to that effect, as stated at the close of the preceding chapter, while engaged in his mercantile enterprise at Philadelphia. His only brother was apparently in failing health. His aged mother longed to have him come back to her; so did all his seven sisters, with their husbands and children. They mourned his absence, and had confidently indulged the hope of having him restored to them on the termination of his duties connected with the army of the Revolution. The whole family were remarkably bound together by the ties of affection, and all took pride in his character and cherished the deepest love and respect towards him. He reciprocated these sentiments fully and ardently. He was a faithful and devoted son and brother. His judgment, however, prevailed over his feelings at this crisis, and he could not but continue in the conviction that his duty to his children required him to seek some other field in which to labor for their establishment in life than was opened in Massachusetts.

At the same time, the calls for his return were so strong that he could not wholly disregard them, and sometimes they almost shook his purpose. At one conjuncture they prevailed, and he made up his mind to return to his native place. But circumstances, now to be related, again changed his purpose.

In fulfilment of the understanding, when at the call of Washington he relinquished every thing and joined the army, the people of the county stood ever ready to reinstate him by their votes in the office of Register of Deeds ; but he could not reconcile himself to the thought of returning to that situation while his brother lived.

Then, again, he was assured that a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court awaited his return to the State. But his conscientious scruples presented an insurmountable obstacle in the way of yielding to this otherwise tempting offer. He always frankly expressed his readiness to take any public position for which he felt himself fit, that would help him to maintain his family ; but he refused, over and over again, desirable offices, for which there was a doubt in his own mind of his having the requisite qualifications. This was one instance. He told his friends who were engaged in the arrangement, that he could not think for a moment of accepting an appointment as Judge of the Supreme Court. He had, it was true, before and at the opening of the war, been a Judge of the County Court and of Admiralty. But long years had passed since his thoughts had been directed to such matters ; circumstances had prevented his ever making any considerable legal attainments ; his professional practice had been brief and limited, and he never had enjoyed any leisure to pursue or preserve what learning

he might have had in the law. These considerations led him positively to decline the proposal of making him a Judge of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts.

The result was that, when his mercantile operations were brought to a close, his mind became fixed in the determination of opening a settlement in the wilderness for a permanent home. The intelligence that he had come to this conclusion was received with the deepest regret by his friends in Massachusetts. The following is one of many letters addressed to him on this occasion and subject. It is a pleasing specimen of the lively humor and warm affection that characterized Judge Sargeant's epistolary style. The Colonel's reply, besides interesting domestic details, shows the enthusiasm with which he contemplated the line of life on which he was proposing to enter. Agricultural enterprises and pursuits always presented rose-colored visions to his ardent imagination.

"HAVERHILL, May 10th, 1785.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"Mr. Payson has kindly offered to procure a conveyance for this letter. I therefore embrace this opportunity to let you know that you have a brother and sister in the world, which we supposed you had forgot. She cordially joins with me in love to you, sister, and our unknown cousin. She enjoys a good state of health. I have, for three weeks, been hacking out a troublesome cold, and find old age has nearly got hold of me. How he and I shall suit together I can't certainly tell yet. Some future paper may inform you more of it. Your coz, Sally White, is safely married to Mr. Payson, and I hope happily too. He and Mr. Johnston are in trade here, and in partnership. Their business is very large for this place, and they support a very good character; and I hope they will make their business turn to good account. I suppose you might know them both when they lived in Salem, about ten years ago.

“We had flying reports that you thought of going to *Karenhappuchiana*, or some such plaguy hard-named place, *christened by Congress*, to set up farming. Your sister, *whose judgment I know is good*, and, be sure, *I don't think mine is less so*, both agree that you ought not to go to farming. We think neither you or sister can be happy in that way of living. We hope nothing but dire necessity — which Heaven avert — will determine you to that employment. We ardently wish that you may, sooner or later, get back to your old friends, which will make them happy if you are so. If you can see any views I have in writing this long scrawl, I am very glad, for I can find none, but to let you know that we are your most affectionate brother and sister,

“NATHANIEL PEASLEE and MARY SARGEANT.”

“PHILADELPHIA, June 11th, 1785.

“DEAR SIR,

“I received your favor enclosed in the letter of Johnston and Payson, and am happy to learn that my sister enjoys so good health, and that Sally is married with so fair prospects. I wish that both may continue. Now and then, when I have occasion to recur to some past event, and say ‘about thirty years ago,’ I feel a sudden surprise at my advanced age; but you will say, perhaps, that I am fortunate enough if I meet with no other mementos of it. *Truly I feel none*. Perhaps I never enjoyed better health, though my bones are as prominent as ever. Some ten or twelve years hence, perchance, I may speak of old age as you do now. Yet, as I have *less burthen* to carry on my journey, I hope I shall not so soon complain of fatigue; certainly this would be against me if I go to ‘Karenhappuchiana,’ ‘Mughilbucktum,’ or other part of the American wilderness. In this case I should hope to enjoy yet twenty years of health and vigor. And, in that period, with ten thousand acres about me, completely improved, I should have reason to be satisfied with my choice. A right to such a tract of land, within one hundred and fifty miles of Philadelphia, and requiring only twenty or thirty miles of land-carriage for produce I have purchased. When the surveys are completed, and the patents in my pocket, it will

stand me a pistareen an acre, or rather less. 'Tis chiefly good, strong beech land, interspersed with sugar-maple, some excellent ash, and some white oaks. In some parts there is large white pine. I am concerned in a company who have a hundred and twenty thousand acres together, answering the above description. By the close of summer, or in the fall, I shall have this business completed, and then I intend to visit the county of Essex, with a view to obtain *settlers*. Will you spare me any for myself and company? Settlers we must get, whether I go myself or not. I am not absolutely determined; possibly something may intervene to prevent me. I did please myself with the idea of taking Mrs. P. with me; but I suspect it may not to her be convenient.

"You know we have four boys. Charles, the youngest, perhaps, will excel his brothers. He was twelve months old the 25th ult. He goes alone, and yesterday was whipping a top; having a perfect idea of the sport, though not being able, like his brothers, to keep it up. He has by far the finest eye; and the brightness of the eye is often emblematic of the mind. We think none of them defective in understanding. John is the most docile child I have been acquainted with. He was but eight years old last February. Of upwards of one hundred boys at the Episcopal Academy, not one reads better than he. He spells remarkably well, and writes a good hand. In reading he marks the accent, emphasis, cadences, and stops with more propriety than I have known done by so young a boy. Tim has equal sagacity, but is of a disposition somewhat truant: he loves *fun*. Henry is a sturdy boy, who has not yet been shown a letter, but discovers no want of capacity. Do I prate? and, in defiance of my pretensions to the contrary, have I betrayed the *old man*, by my garrulity? Nevertheless, my sister will not be displeased with my story. To her, to you and Sally, accept the tender of sincere affection from

"T. and R. PICKERING.

"P. S. — My sister will have heard of the arrival of Betsey White, the only sister of my wife. We are much pleased with her; and by her dexterity with her needle and uncommon industry, my wife receives the most useful aid."

Colonel Pickering did not, however, visit Essex County to procure settlers, or send for them. A change came over his plan, shortly after the date of the foregoing letter, which diverted him from settling on wild lands, and, for a time, he was led to consider it expedient and necessary to return to his native State.

Near the conclusion of the previous volume, the extreme sickness and unexpected recovery of his brother are mentioned. The circumstances of that case were so peculiar, and the consequent effects upon the course of life of the subject of this memoir so serious and momentous, that they may be more particularly related. John Pickering was a man of marked characteristics. He was a graduate of Harvard College, of the class of 1759. Being the elder son, he inherited the larger part of the family property. He was never married. His tastes and acquired habits led him to seek to adhere to a private and quiet course of life, from which, however, he was forced, by the importunities of his fellow-citizens, occasionally and to some extent to depart. For twelve years he was a Representative from Salem in the legislature, and for three years Speaker of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts. He was an original member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The public confidence in his integrity, patriotism, and wisdom, was deep and enduring. He occupied himself mainly in agricultural pursuits, declining the office of Notary Public and other employments that would have constantly interfered with the care of his farm, or annoyed him by breaking in too considerably upon his chosen retirement from public affairs.

But when his brother was summoned to permanent

service in the army of the Revolution, his fraternal affection induced him so far to forego his inclinations as to consent to take his place as Register of Deeds for the County of Essex, with the understanding that, upon the termination of his brother's military service, he was to be relieved from the situation. This was the view of the arrangement taken by the public also. All the people appreciated the sacrifice Timothy made in abandoning the means of supporting his family, at the call of Washington and in devotion to the cause of the country; and there was a universal concurrence of feeling and purpose that, if he lived to return, his civil offices should be restored to him. John, as Timothy had been, was re-elected unanimously Register of Deeds. Its duties were found not inconsistent with the preference for unobtrusive positions and a retired line of life, which so strikingly distinguished him from his younger brother. John was a still man, of few words, shrinking from the conflicts of life. Timothy was demonstrative, and prompt to engage in whatever discussions, controversies, or activities awakened his sensibilities or attracted his attention. Unlike as they were in these respects, the brothers had equal strength of character, purity of purpose, integrity of principles, and conscientiousness in the discharge of all duties and trusts. They loved each other with a singular affection, most beautifully manifested in a life-long correspondence on all matters of private family business and public affairs. During the Colonel's unexpectedly protracted military service, John had become accustomed to the details of the office of Register of Deeds; his daily life ran easily along its routine, and he had acquired familiarity with the per-

sons and interests of the whole people of the county. His brother was unwilling to disturb what had become an established state of things. John was not only ready, but would have been delighted at any time to welcome Timothy back, and at once, in fulfilment of the original arrangement, made way for the transference of the office back to him ; but Timothy was impressed with the conviction that the discontinuance of the employment to which his old-bachelor brother had become habituated would be accompanied by some discomfort, at least for a time. For these reasons he would not hearken to the proposition to take his place ; and it may be considered certain that, if he had returned to Salem, he would, during his brother's life, have absolutely refused to allow the original arrangement to be carried out, so far as related to the office of Register of Deeds. When, at the conclusion of the war, his mother, brother, sisters, and all his relatives and connections, as well as the people of the county and commonwealth generally, besought him to come back and be reinstated among them, he was undoubtedly led by the feelings now described, positively and persistently, to decline. He consequently resolved to provide for his family by entering into arrangements in other directions ; but his plans to this end were for a time suspended.

In the latter part of 1785, John Pickering, who for some time had been unwell, gave indications of rapidly failing health, which continually increased until his case became alarming, and, as the year 1786 opened, he had sunk so low that all hopes of his recovery were abandoned. The following passages from letters of the Rev. John Clarke to Colonel Pickering show the nature and progress of his disease : —

“BOSTON, December 1st, 1785.

“The occasion of this letter (which I write in very great haste) is the alarming situation of your brother. He thinks himself better, but I am fully persuaded he is worse. His cough increases upon him. His pain in the side does not abate. A person who has carefully observed his countenance says it has changed; and, to tell you the plain truth, I have every reason to think he is going into a consumption. His friends are not all of them aware of this, but you will find it is not an imagination of my own. I thought it proper to communicate my sentiments respecting this matter, that, if they should eventually be true, you might not be wholly unprepared.”

“BOSTON, January 11th, 1786.

“My Uncle John grows continually weaker. He is not only in a confirmed consumption, but in the last stages of it. Several ulcers have collected and broken. He has no expectation of his own life, but wishes for the relief which death only can afford. His spirits, however, are as high as usual, and he is rather more sociable.

“Dr. Orne is now confined to his bed. I expect every day will be his last. My uncle cannot long survive him. Salem will meet with a great loss, and the people in general seem to be sensible of it.”

Letters to the same effect were written by other members of the family. John, not expecting to live many days, caused the features of his will to be communicated to Timothy, that he might at once be apprised of the circumstances that would require his immediate presence after the looked-for event, and demand his personal attention in the distribution of the property that would thus fall to him and his numerous sisters.

Upon the receipt of intelligence of this sort, the Colonel absolutely abandoned all his other engagements and plans, and signified his determination to return forthwith to Salem as his permanent residence. The feeling of delicacy, as to the office of Register of Deeds,

being removed, he made known his purpose, and prepared to communicate to his friends in the county his readiness, on the death of his brother, to accept the situation, if conferred upon him by the votes of the people. It seemed at the time a settled thing that the residue of his life would pursue, in the daily discharge of the duties of a clerical and local office, the course in which it was running when the war of the Revolution broke out.

He could not immediately leave Philadelphia, and it was not necessary ; as his brother, although slowly declining, did not appear to be so near his end as had been apprehended. The malady *inexorabilis phthisis*, generally thought, as by his nephew Clarke, to be incurable, is subject to great fluctuations. Hopes are often excited in the minds of friends, and especially of the patient, by favorable symptoms ; but the result is found inevitably the same. So it was thought it would prove in this case. John Pickering, at times, appeared to be slightly better ; but, on the whole, the disease seemed to be steadily triumphing over all remedies and all checks. For a long period he was hovering over the brink of the grave. When, however, he was supposed to be dropping into it, a marvellous change took place.

In the early part of March, Judge Sargeant met in Boston one of the Selectmen of his town (Haverhill), who showed him a secret circular letter, addressed to the Selectmen of the several towns in the county of Essex, by a person soliciting votes for the office of Register of Deeds, on the ground of John Pickering's disability and supposed nearly impending death. George Williams, happening to be there at the time, obtained permission to take the circular letter, and drove back with it, post-

haste, to Salem. It was Friday, and the election was to take place on the following Monday. Upon reaching Salem, Mr. Williams made the matter known to John Pickering, handing him the document. He was filled with surprise and indignation; started from his bed; called for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote a letter on the spot, with his own hand, to the Selectmen of the towns, announcing himself a candidate for re-election to the office. The letter was forthwith despatched, and reached the Selectmen of every town by Saturday night. On Monday he was re-elected, receiving nearly the whole vote of the county.

The indignation of John Pickering on this occasion was partly owing to the feeling that it was an outrage upon the proprieties of the moment to start this movement without his knowledge, while he was so near his end, but chiefly because it was a violation of the understanding, not only among friends of the family, but the people of the county generally, that, upon his failing to hold the office, it should be restored to his brother.

The angry excitement into which the sick man was thus so suddenly thrown renewed his expiring strength, started into action his whole system, and poured a warmer circulation through every vein. His passions and his will, as they were thus roused, brought up with them his sinking frame, and restored its wonted energies. It was like a shock of electricity, exploding and dispersing the fatal elements of his disease. It stopped the ebbing tide of life, and turned it into a flood of reviving health. From that moment he was better, and the consumptive symptoms began to disappear. Mr. Williams, in giving an account of it, in a letter to Colonel Picker-

ing, said that "his resentment gave a spring to his spirits, and has done him more good than all the doctors."

The belief among his friends had become so fixed that his disease was incurable, and he had been brought so near to death's door, that it was long before they could be convinced that he was really recovering health. In a letter of Mr. Clarke to Colonel Pickering, of April 29th, 1786, he says, "He is able to quit his chamber, and join the circle below. I am astonished when I reflect on his situation. That he cannot live long is, however, the settled opinion of yours," &c. Writing again, on the 9th of June, he says, "I have lately paid a visit to Salem, and I must say I have no expectation my uncle John Pickering can live. For a number of weeks he may, indeed, endure life ; but it is impossible he should ever be a well man. His disorder is a consumption. And was a consumption ever radically cured ? You had better turn your thoughts toward your native place, and avoid every connection which may fix you in that part of the country where you now reside."

While his relatives were thus incredulous as to his recovery, John Pickering himself felt that, although the process was slow, he was steadily getting better. In the first letter he wrote to his brother, dated June 6th, 1786, a few days before that of Mr. Clarke, from which the last extract has been made, he says, "A long time has passed since you have received any letter from me. A very severe indisposition of body prevented my writing. I am now weak and infirm, and still troubled with a cough, but that is much less than it has been, and my pains of body are now very small. I walk and

ride abroad when the weather is good." Again writing, October 27th, 1786, he says, "I have, my dear brother, for the last few weeks enjoyed myself free from pain of body, and have coughed but little, and in all respects been better than I have been for ten or twelve months before. I can walk from my house to brother Williams's and back again, without difficulty; but I am still weak and an invalid."

John Pickering's health was, at last, fully restored, and he continued to record the deeds of the county, and conduct the operations on his farms, for a quarter of a century afterwards.

The details of his disease, with the opinion Mr. Williams expressed as to the efficient agency towards its cure, have been given, because the case is of singular interest, and possibly of importance. Whether it may be expedient, judicious, or practicable, to arrest the progress of maladies of the kind by giving such a start to the feelings, and through them to the vital circulations, of a patient, is the question. At any rate the precedent is worthy of preservation, and of taking its place in the history and science of therapeutics.

The amendment of his brother's health again changed Colonel Pickering's plans. As the necessity of his return to his native State was removed, the vision he had indulged of reclaiming, by the labors of twenty years, ten thousand acres of the wilderness, bringing it under cultivation, and thus providing valuable and permanent estates for his children, revived in his mind. Another consideration combined to turn his thoughts decisively against making his residence in Massachusetts. That State was then convulsed by agitations that threatened

to overthrow the whole fabric of law and government, and which actually soon ripened into a formidable rebellion.

A letter from his brother informed him that movements were making to abolish the Court of Common Pleas, and to revolutionize the established order of things, dispensing with the registration of deeds by a county officer, and lodging it with the clerks of the several towns. He says, "The unhappy insurrections in several parts of the Massachusetts, and obstructions to the courts of law, have filled the minds of the thinking members with anxious concern. Our General Court met in consequence of these troubles, and are now sitting. A very small part of the inhabitants of Essex appear to countenance the conduct of their Western brethren." His brother-in-law, Judge Sargeant, wrote to him from Boston to the same effect. He says, "The aspect of our public affairs is truly alarming. I could write you a volume on the subject, but suppose the newspapers will carry you bad news fast enough. Northampton and Worcester Common Pleas are stopped. This week I suppose Concord, Taunton, and Berkshire courts will stop. The next week I expect our court at Worcester, and so in succession, at Springfield, Great Barrington, and Taunton, will share the same fate. The flagitious Tories, taking advantage of the pressure of honest debts, high taxes, and scarcity of money, have stirred up a true Catalinarian conspiracy against the government. God only knows if they will not go nigh to succeed."

With such a state of things in Massachusetts, it is not to be wondered at that Colonel Pickering preferred

Pennsylvania for a home. It will appear, in the issue, that he did not thereby avoid the terrors of lawlessness, but in escaping Scylla fell into Charybdis.

Upon hearing of his determination, his friends expressed their deep regret, still continuing their remonstrances and solicitations to him to return to them. His brother says: "It has always been my wish, and the wish of all your sisters, that you might be settled in this State, or near to us, and my state of health has made me often wish you had all the offices I hold in this county." His nephew Clarke used stronger and more uncontrolled language:

"I cannot but totally disapprove your removal to the uncultivated parts of your State. You must return to Salem, — your friends all expect it. They all ardently desire it. My Uncle John continually wishes to see you in your native place; and we promise ourselves we shall once more be happy in your society. Do not disappoint our expectations. The Register's office can be yours immediately. You can be an acting justice. You can be a farmer. You can be a merchant. And you can be a blessing to all your friends, particularly to your very affectionate,

"J. CLARKE."

The following letter, in reply to that just quoted, gives the conclusion of the whole matter. The subject of what move he should next make in life — which had exercised the anxious thoughts of Colonel Pickering for more than a year, kept his plans in painful suspense, and in reference to which there had been such fluctuations of purpose — was now settled and disposed of.

"PHILADELPHIA, October 11th, 1786.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Your favor by S. Gardner, he delivered me on the 9th in the evening. Your affectionate solicitations excited all my

feelings. My heart was ever with you ; and I was grieved at the idea of a permanent separation. But my apparent interest checked my wishes ; and *now the die is cast*. Last Monday the Supreme Executive Council appointed me Prothonotary [Clerk] of the Court of Common Pleas, Clerk of the Court of Sessions, and Clerk of the Orphans Court for the new county of Luzerne, and a Judge of the same Court of Common Pleas. As soon as the Assembly meets (which will be on the 23d instant), I shall apply for the office of Register of Wills and Recorder of Deeds for the same county. The Register of Wills is the Judge of Probate, as well as the Register of the proceedings in that court.

“ You will wonder to see so many offices vested in one person , but it is here the practice, in new counties, because, where there are few inhabitants, the fees are consequently few. The two last offices are in the gift of the Assembly, and I am told that I shall doubtless obtain them.

“ My inducements to accept of these offices are various. 1. My lands nearest to Philadelphia lie in the county of Luzerne, and I can promote the settlement of them, while I hold these offices. 2. Sundry gentlemen of my acquaintance, who are large landholders in the same county, will commit the disposition of their lands to me on commission. 3. The offices are not at present lucrative, yet, as the county will populate rapidly, the gentlemen of the law assure me that, in a few years, they will become greatly so. 4. While the *profits* are small, the *business* will be small, and admit of my frequent absence to direct the settlement and improvement of my lands. 5. By the time that my sons come of age, the business of the several offices will be so increased as to require a separation ; when, if I should live, I can successively resign one and another into the hands of my sons. These, I hope, you will deem weighty reasons for my determination.

“ There is another consideration which your philanthropy will pronounce an important one. This new county is chiefly settled by New England people, and multitudes more are ready to emigrate from that country to this, provided the dispute with the Wyoming people [as to the title to their lands] were settled. As one probable means of settling the

dispute, these appointments are conferred upon me. On one hand, I possess the confidence of government; on the other, it is presumed I shall be acceptable to my countrymen. I have it much in my power to effect a reconciliation. This I shall attempt. Further, these people, during the late war, have been destitute of instruction, both civil and religious. I shall have it in inclination, as it will be not a little in my power, to introduce such means of education as will prevent their degenerating to a savage state, to which they have been verging.

"I shall write you again after the meeting of the Assembly. At present I have only time to add, that I am most affectionately yours.

"T. PICKERING.

"REV. JOHN CLARKE."

In a letter to his brother dated "Philadelphia, November 15th, 1786," he says : —

"DEAR BROTHER,

"With heartfelt gratitude, I read your letter of the 27th ult., by Captain Very. I hope your attention to business will be so moderate, and your exercise so constant and regular, as to confirm your recovery to health. Your friends and the public will rejoice in the event." [After giving a list of the offices conferred upon him by the Council and the Assembly, the same as mentioned in his letter to Mr. Clarke, he goes on, as follows.] "The office of Judge of the Common Pleas is given to enable the Prothonotary (according to the usage here) to sign all writs, and it is only in *particular* cases that he takes a seat on the bench.

"The Register of Wills not only records the proceedings in the Probate Court, but takes the probate of wills, and grants letters of administration. In deciding on certain judicial matters, in the Probate Court, he calls in to his assistance two justices of the peace.

"The Orphan Court, composed of the justices of the county, takes cognizance of the estates of orphans.

"Luzerne is a new county, and comprehends a large tract of country, full one hundred miles in length and forty or

fifty in breadth; but 'tis thinly peopled. Indeed the bulk of it is yet a wilderness, though there are some settlers, along the river Susquehanna, at both extremes of it. It comprehends the Wyoming District, which was a long time in dispute between Pennsylvania and Connecticut. The latter State was excluded by the decision of the Continental Court at Trenton; and the dispute with the *occupants* of the land is in a train for settlement. This ended, the county will rapidly populate, and then the afore-mentioned offices will become very valuable. In the mean time, they will give me leisure to attend to the settlement and improvement of my lands, which fall within the county. Some gentlemen of the law, and others acquainted with those offices in other of the *quondam* frontier counties of this State, say my prospects are very great; and, with this account of them, I hope my determination will be approved by you.

“The total separation from my friends was painful to me; but I thought the interest of my family demanded the sacrifice.

“I remain, my dear brother, most affectionately yours,

“T. PICKERING.”

The other offices seem, by the policy of the State in organizing new counties, to have been attached to that of Prothonotary, for which alone, therefore, it was necessary to make formal application. The following document fully shows the views with which the appointments were sought and conferred:—

“TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, AND THE HONORABLE THE COUNCIL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

“The Subscriber begs leave to present himself as a candidate for the office of Prothonotary for the County of Luzerne.

“I have been informed that the bill for erecting the Wyoming District into a separate county is passed into a law, and that the civil officers for the county are now to be ap-

pointed. The office of Prothonotary has been proposed for my consideration, on these grounds: that the forming that district into a separate county was intended as a conciliatory measure; that, with the same view, it must be the desire of government to appoint such persons to the civil offices in the county as may be most likely to allay the jealousies subsisting among the New England settlers, and at the same time possess the confidence of the rest of the State; that, being a native of New England (though not of Connecticut), the settlers will be gratified by my appointment; and that having, for several years, been conversant in, and an inhabitant of Pennsylvania, I am here sufficiently known; and the gentlemen who have proposed the office to me have been pleased to say that I should doubtless enjoy the confidence of the State. If these opinions are well founded, there will be no impropriety in my requesting of your Excellency, and the Honorable the Council, to be appointed Prothonotary for the County of Luzerne, which office will be gratefully accepted and, I trust, duly executed.

“I have the honor to be, most respectfully, your Excellency’s and Honors’ obedient servant,

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“PHILADELPHIA, September 25th, 1786.”

Such were the purposes, motives, and expectations with which Colonel Pickering was now to make, as he then designed and believed it to be, his last move. Turning away from all conspicuous public positions, he withdrew to a retired scene of humble industry, and services of limited local usefulness. He was to become a settler in a wilderness,—a backwoodsman,—and it was his whole ambition, by his influence and exertions, to restore peace and quiet among rude men who had been wrangling and fighting for more than thirty years; to establish order, law, education, and religion in a secluded rural district; and to transform, by conducting

and co-operating in the hardest kind of toil, a pathless forest into fertile fields and valuable farms. The personal endurances to be undergone had no terrors for him. Labor, bodily or mental, was the luxury of his life. His physical energies were equal to all the demands of axe, hoe, or plough; to the utmost exposures and the roughest conditions. The prospects of ultimate success inspired him with confidence and gladness, and he felt safe and sure in indulging his long-cherished visions of agricultural independence and pastoral tranquillity. Little did he foresee that hardships and perils awaited him, which give to this stage of his biography an interest wholly singular, and, as has been stated, without a parallel in the experience of any other eminent men of his day.

The foregoing documents refer to what he called the Wyoming "dispute," one of the most remarkable passages in the interior annals of this country, which it will be the purpose of the next chapter to narrate and explain.

CHAPTER VII.

Wyoming Lands Controversy.

1753-1778.

BEFORE proceeding to relate Colonel Pickering's experience and adventures in the interior of Pennsylvania, it is expedient to explain, with some particularity, the state of things in the territory where he was about to fix his abode. To do this it becomes necessary to go back to a period long antecedent to the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, and to discuss a topic belonging to colonial history, and to a region invested with the interest of romance from the extraordinary sufferings and horrors of which it was the scene; and for ever made attractive to the imaginations and sensibilities of all men the world over by the charms of poetry in strains of immortal beauty.

The subject is entangled in controversies, at that and at the present time hard to settle, and embracing acts of violence and outrage upon which it is equally difficult to pass judgment or offer explanation. The transactions occurred in the depths of a then remote and almost inaccessible wilderness. Those who took a leading share in them were instigated by parties at a distance. It is impossible to measure responsibility where every thing conspired to aggravate the sense of wrong, and mislead the judgment of all concerned. But

few records or documents exist to throw adequate light on the events or the actors. Darkness envelopes the whole subject, and conflicting statements, interests, and passions perplex attempts to present the case in its true merits. I shall describe it with reference to the main historical facts and general considerations relating to it, without indorsing the violent excitements on either side, or participating in the prejudices in which all were involved.

It is quite necessary to present the topic somewhat at length, in order to explain a state of things with which the subject of this biography became singularly and critically connected ; and to show the origin of a social demoralization and turbulence, a spirit of insubordination and general distrust, a proneness to violent civil convulsions, — the result of extraordinary and long-continued contentions, wrongs, distresses, and desolations to which that region had been subjected, producing a condition of the public passions which had, for a generation, defied all the repressive and remedial efforts of government ; and whose last outbreaks he was called to encounter, control, and subdue. The narrative will be given in as condensed a form as possible, presenting succinctly the leading points of a protracted train of events, in as regular an order as can be educed from available records and the most reliable traditions.

The ignorance universally prevailing as to the dimensions, outlines, and geographical features of the North American Continent, and as to the relative positions of its several portions, when the English Colonies were planted upon it, led to a use of language — in defining the boundaries and extent of the territories designed to

be embraced in the respective original charters granted by the Crown of England — that occasioned serious and lasting difficulties. They were based upon a certain specified width, extending in parallel lines “from sea to sea,” as the expression was; that is, from the Atlantic shore to that of the supposed western ocean, wherever that shore, then undiscovered, might be found to be. The irregular slants of the eastern front of the Continent, not then understood or surveyed, caused these grants to run into, overlie, and cross each other, so that large areas of country were ultimately found to fall within the charter limits of two or more Colonies; conflicting claims consequently arose as to jurisdiction and proprietary rights, particularly between New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. These conflicts became sharp, bitter, earnest, and pertinacious. An idea prevailed that the interior and unexplored regions were rich in various mineral ores; in all likelihood in precious metals; and, beyond question, were of much greater natural fertility than any then-settled portions of the country. The imaginations of men were everywhere wrought upon by accounts of casual explorers and others who had listened to tales that had currency among wandering aborigines. The fancied riches of these parts of the newly discovered world also excited the credulity of European nations; and adventurous expeditions were made by the French on the north, and Spaniards on the south, up the mighty rivers St. Lawrence and Mississippi, across and around the Great Lakes; of many of which, doubtless, no record remains. This feeling gave energy and earnestness to the contests for jurisdiction and dominion

between the people of the great maritime and military powers over the western forests of America. It, of course, spread through the British American Colonies, whose inhabitants, from their proximity to the coveted regions and more direct and natural connection with them, could not but have their thoughts drawn with lively interest in that direction.

As the resolute determination of England to assert and recover her claims to the North American Continent became known and appreciated, her colonists turned their attention, with particular scrutiny, to the language of the charters, giving them indefinite extension, even from sea to sea. Individuals and parties, acting under the auspices of companies formed for the purpose, went forth from the older settlements deeper and deeper into the wilderness; keeping between the lines specified, and, however far they went, claiming to be within the limits, and shielded by the sovereignty of the respective Colonies to which they belonged. When, having been thus careful to observe the proper boundaries, they found themselves confronted by persons of other Provinces, making similar pretensions, and claiming, under other charters emanating from the same royal authority, the rightful possession of the country, serious consequences were inevitable. Controversies and conflicts ensued. The final conquest of Canada by Great Britain gave a new impulse to this tendency to emigrate to the western wilderness, which had indeed been for some time in process. The consummation of that event made every English colonist feel that the whole Continent was now his own.

The settlement by adventurers, actuated by this spirit,

on a tract of land which was afterwards declared by Pennsylvania, New York, and Connecticut to be within their respective charter limits, became the occasion of one of the most memorable conflicts arising from this cause in our history. As in this conflict Colonel Pickering was destined to be most responsibly and perilously involved, it becomes an element in his biography requiring to be explained with some particularity. The settlers pitched upon the locality, because it was within the charter lines of Connecticut, the Colony to which they belonged, and they had been led into the enterprise by prominent parties in that Colony, clothed with corporate powers conferred by its legislative authorities. The territory they occupied and claimed embraced the country around the Great Bend of the Susquehanna and both its main forks or branches, and stretching up to the present southern line of New York and above it. The present counties in Pennsylvania of Northumberland, Montour, Columbia, Luzerne, Wyoming, Bradford, and Tioga, are comprehended in what was claimed by these Connecticut settlers. Wilkesbarre and its neighborhood were the scenes of the principal transactions between and among the conflicting parties. The entire region had been established as a county by the then government of Pennsylvania, under the name of Northumberland; and in the course of the controversy the same area was made first a town, and then a county, of Connecticut, under the name of Westmoreland, by an act of the legislature of that Colony. Indeed, at one time the parties in Connecticut, under whose auspices the emigrants had been sent out, and who instigated and backed their proceedings, had in view to establish a

new separate State there, under the same name, Westmoreland.

Before going further into the details of this affair, and to give a just view of the character of this remarkable land controversy, the following passage from the "History of the United States of North America," by James Graham, LL.D. (vol. iv., p. 128), may properly be quoted :

"A passion for occupying new territories and forming new settlements rose to an antazing height in New Hampshire and in every other quarter of New England ; and the gratification of this taste fostered a stubborn resolution and habits of daring and hardy enterprise congenial to the prevalent sentiments of independence, and propitious to the efforts which these sentiments portended. The continual migrations of this provincial race from their own proper territory to every other quarter of America exerted also (as it still continues to exert) a highly beneficial effect in improving and assimilating all the American communities, by spreading through their people the knowledge and virtue, the spirit, character, and habits so diligently cultivated in New England, and so honorably distinctive of her peculiar population. Among other new settlements created by the exuberant vigor of New England, at this period, was one whose primitive manners and happiness, as well as the miserable desolation which it subsequently underwent in the Revolutionary war, have been rescued from neglect and oblivion by the genius of a poet of Scotland, — the settlement of Wyoming on the banks of the river Susquehanna. The territory of this settlement had been purchased several years before by an association of Connecticut planters from the Indian Confederacy of the Six Nations ; but first the war with France, and afterwards the war with the Indians, deterred the resort of inhabitants to the soil till the year 1763, when it was first colonized by emigrants from Connecticut. The social union of various races of men, and the conversion of gallant warriors into patriarchs and husbandmen, so beautifully described by Campbell in his ' Gertrude of Wyoming,'

is rendered probable by the increased resort which now took place of emigrants to America from every quarter of Europe, including a considerable number of British officers, who, deprived of their occupation by the peace, and smitten with the charms of rural life in America, transferred their residence to a land to which their victorious heroism had imparted additional value and security. This settlement, like the occupation of the Vermont territory, gave rise to a controversy on which poetry has no colors to bestow. A keen litigation for the dominion of it arose between the government of Connecticut, to which it properly belonged, and the proprietaries of Pennsylvania, who derived a plausible claim from the vagueness of their charter, and who, like the Royal Governors of New York and New Hampshire, were eager to augment their emoluments by multiplying the occasions of exacting fees for grants of lands, to which the grantees had already, by previous purchase from the natural owners, a much more equitable title than those pretenders to sovereignty were able to confer."

Graham refers, as his authority for the views here given, to Trumbull, the historian of Connecticut, and his sympathies were, as a consequence, naturally in favor of the settlers from that Colony, in the prolonged experiences of suffering, accompanied by loss of property and life, to which they were subjected. There are some points in his statement that require comment. Emigrants from Connecticut had taken up their abode in the disputed territory at an earlier date than is assigned by Graham, — earlier than supposed by Colonel Pickering when treating the subject in a letter which will be given in full in a subsequent chapter. The precise time when Connecticut emigrants first appeared there is involved in oblivion, and was prior to any known record. The following citations show that they were there, and apparently had been for some time, in 1760: —

In the "Aspinwall Papers," recently published by the Massachusetts Historical Society in its "Collections," there are documents that prove this.* Richard Peters (uncle of the celebrated Revolutionary patriot of that name), whose services for nearly a quarter of a century in the administration of the affairs of Pennsylvania, as Secretary to the Governor, member of the Council, and in charge of the Land Office, make him the highest authority as to the details in the history of that Province, writing from Philadelphia to General Monckton, August 14th, 1760, says: "I am told that the people of Connecticut are attempting to get footing in the Indian country above and west of Cashictan, in latitude 41.40 minutes, and from thence to latitude 41, under a pretence that their Royal grant gives them to the south towns. This, if true, may do infinite mischief at this time." In another letter from Peters to Monckton, dated at Philadelphia, August 15th, 1761, after giving a brief account of a "grand meeting," at which the Governor and authorities of Pennsylvania had been "amusing themselves" with an assemblage of Indians belonging to the "Six Nations," and five other subordinate tribes, at Easton in that Province, he states that the "Connecticut *Settlement*" was spoken of. The Pennsylvania dignitaries gave to the Indians their views in reference to that settlement. As Peters says: "This was related to them in its naked truth; and they were, moreover, told that these vagrants settled those lands under color of Indian purchases, and they were asked if they had sold the lands to the New-England people. They denied it, and mentioned that

* Vol. ix., Fourth Series, pp. 300-440.

some private Indians had taken upon them to sell it." Peters goes on to state that "a string" was given them "to carry to the Onondaga Council, and to request that, in full council, they would reprove their young men, and declare those sales void. In short, presents were made as usual, and a large number of Quakers attended and were as busy as ever."

The foregoing passages shed light upon a point on which the subsequent controversies, to a great degree, hinged. The Connecticut Company claimed to have purchased the lands from the Indian proprietors. The government of Pennsylvania insisted that the purchase had been made of a few Indians, unauthorized to convey the lands, and affirmed that the transaction had been disowned by a full council of the "Six Nations" and their allied tribes. The letters of Peters bring to view the means used by the government of Pennsylvania to procure this disavowal, and show some ground for the conviction entertained by the Connecticut settlers that they had not been fairly dealt with. They felt that they had obtained the lands, in an open and regular way, from chiefs and sachems authorized to sell them; that they had paid in good faith the stipulated price; and that the "Six Nations" had been led, by undue influence, to disavow the bargain. Hence the pertinacity and animosity with which they persevered in the subsequent contests for the territory. In point of fact, both parties, at one time or another, secured a purchase of the lands from the "Six Nations," ostensibly in "full council."

This has, indeed, been the difficulty experienced at all times, to the present day, in reference to regions of country purchased of Indians. The government of tribes

is so undefined and uncertain, that questions as to the authority of particular chiefs to negotiate business of this sort can easily be raised, which it is impossible to settle in the absence of formal records and written credentials duly authenticated.

The Connecticut "Susquehanna Company" was recognized, and established by the legislature of that Colony in 1754. It made, soon after, the alleged purchase, and settlers sent on by it had undoubtedly taken possession, begun to cut down the forests, break the ground, and build log-houses and barns, some time, it is impossible to say how long, prior to 1761. The government of Connecticut forthwith, and continually, treated the territory as within its jurisdiction. It was incorporated, as has just been stated, by acts of the Assembly of that Colony, first as a town, and then as a county, duly organized as such, and brought by these formal acts under its laws and jurisdiction. Commissions, conferring the functions of justice of peace, were issued. Members elected by the votes of the settlers took and held seats in the Connecticut House of Assembly. The government of that Colony, it thus appears, officially, publicly, and steadily sustained the cause of its settlers, vindicated their rights, and legalized their proceedings. The settlers were, therefore, justified in insisting upon their allegiance to Connecticut for twenty-eight years, from 1754 to 1782, when, as will appear, a competent judicial tribunal remanded them to the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania, and the controversy ought to have ceased, but unhappily did not.

But besides the question of the validity of the Indian purchases, and beneath it, was the question of charter

limits. Pennsylvania was a proprietary government, owned by the heirs and representatives of William Penn, holding under the charter granted to him by the King of England. Pennsylvania claimed that, by the language of that charter, she was entitled to the territory occupied by the Connecticut settlers. The administration of affairs in Pennsylvania was subject to particular difficulties and impediments. It was under a complex sovereignty, that of the Crown and Parliament of England, and of a private proprietor, both essentially extraneous; for the representative of the Penn family, for the time being, holding the title and the position of its Governor by inheritance, often resided in the mother country. These two sovereignties were actuated by different controlling motives. The Crown and Parliament aimed to secure and promote the power of the empire by looking after the peaceful subjection and welfare of the Province. The Penns regarded it as a piece of property out of which to make as much money as possible. The consequences of this state of things were injurious, and led to a feebleness and unsteadiness of administration of the affairs of the Province, which aggravated the controversy going on in its remote woods, and, in fact, crippled the energies of the people generally. It was not until years after the Penn proprietary had been swept away, and the Revolution been in progress, that the inherent forces of that State were developed and compacted. For this reason the British found it expedient to make it one of the chief theatres of the war.

The government of Connecticut took all possible means to induce the Penn proprietors to make an arrangement with them. A deputation from its House of

Assembly visited Governor Penn, — then in Philadelphia, and vested with the proprietary power, — and laid proposals before him. But he refused to treat with them. An agent was then sent by Connecticut to England to lay the case before the home government; and a judgment was obtained from the Lords of Council, to whom the matter had been referred, which seemed to be decisive in favor of Connecticut, and amply apologizes for, if it does not fully justify, her claims, and the methods subsequently adopted by the settlers prior to 1782.

In the mean while, the Colony of Pennsylvania, for a large consideration in money, bought out the Penn proprietors. They purchased all the lands belonging to that family within the Colony. No reservation was made, and no attention given, in this purchase, as to the rights of the Connecticut settlers. The controversy thenceforth was between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, much, as was found, to the disadvantage of the settlers. For a long period there had been growing and spreading among the people of Pennsylvania a prejudice against the Penn proprietors, and an aversion to their government, pretensions, and persons. So long as the conflict for those lands was between the “Yankees” and “Pennymites,” as the contending parties were popularly denominated at the time, the people of the older settlements of Pennsylvania, not being immediately connected with the affair, and having no fondness for either side, were not disposed to interfere, but quite willing to stand by, and let the fight go on. To a great extent, indeed, there was a sympathy between the people of the frontier counties and the Wyoming settlers. This accounts for the weak-

ness of the resistance made by that Province, and its inaction, for much of the time, in the earlier years of the controversy. But when the Penn proprietors disappeared wholly from the scene, and it became an unmixed question between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, all the people of the former State became more and more united in maintaining its pretensions. From that moment the government of Pennsylvania grew stronger in its position, and capable of more efficient action. Soon almost the entire people of the other parts of that State were aroused in their feelings against the Connecticut men, and were ultimately, as will be seen, wrought up to a violence of passion against them, resulting in unwise and unjustifiable harshness in measures of administration and legislation.

A brief recapitulation of the principal occurrences in the history of this settlement may here be given. It presents a series of disasters and endurances, such as no other people ever experienced. It shows that its heroic and indomitable inhabitants fairly won, by their courage, resolution, and sacrifices, a title to the acres they tilled and the country they had thus made their own.

In 1763 the population of several hundreds was driven by a sudden Indian assault from the territory, and every house burned to the ground; such of their occupants, as survived the murderous onslaught, escaping to the woods and mountains, and finding their way back as they could to Connecticut. This was the first destruction that fell upon the settlement. It was utter, and supposed to be final.

Pennsylvania thought so. For some time the terri-

tory was vacant. The government of the Province, having completed the negotiations by which the Penn proprietors had been bought out, — the form having previously been gone through of purchasing the lands of the “Six Nations” at an Indian council, some chiefs signing the deed of sale, — executed a lease of them in 1768, to three leading citizens of Pennsylvania, for seven years, who proceeded to occupy and manage the territory. They built a trading house and fort. All this while the Susquehanna Company and the expelled settlers had not been idle, but were making their preparations and awaiting a favorable moment for action.

In February, 1769, an advance party of forty men, started from Connecticut and entered “the Valley,” as the disputed territory began to be called. They invested the fort, which was in charge and under the command of John Jennings, one of the three lessees, and commissioned as Sheriff by the Governor of Pennsylvania. Jennings sent for troops to relieve him; continual accessions were made to the Connecticut force by parties sent on from that Colony; and “Fort Forty,” as they called it, from the number of men in the advanced detachment, was built by them, and became the point around which many conflicts took place. Jennings, having been re-enforced, broke into the fort, and made prisoners of most of the garrison. But another party of two hundred men, under Captain Durkee, reaching the Valley from Connecticut, erected another fort, called “Durkee,” with a large number of block-houses around it, from which approaches to it might be repelled by musketry. In the mean while the Connecticut forces

had increased to three hundred fighting men, and Jennings gave up the contest, leaving the territory in their possession.

Before the close of the year, however, the Connecticut men were again driven from the Valley by a superior force of Pennsylvanians. In February, 1770, Lazarus Stewart, — who, although a Pennsylvanian, seems to have early joined the settlers, — uniting followers of his own with a party from Connecticut, recovered the country, after some hard fighting, for the Yankees, driving out Captain Ogden, one of the three lessees. In a later part of the same year, Ogden, — a strong force being rallied by the Governor of Pennsylvania to aid him, — by a sudden assault, drove out the Yankees again. On the night of the 18th of December, Captain Lazarus Stewart, with a small party, attacked the fort, took the garrison Ogden had left there by surprise, and the Valley was again in the possession of the Connecticut men. In the next month, January, 1771, the Sheriff of Northampton county, with a large body of men, entered the territory, and after some fighting, in which a brother of Ogden was killed, by his superior numbers compelled Stewart to take refuge in the fort; who finding, however, that he could not hold it, withdrew in the night, leaving the Pennymites once more in possession of the Valley, who held it for six months. On the 6th of July, Captain Zebulon Butler, who had a few years before united his fortunes with the settlers, coming from Connecticut with seventy men, and joined by a party under Lazarus Stewart, suddenly descended from the mountains. He compelled Ogden to retreat into his fort, and commenced a vigorous siege of it, in the course

of which many were killed. Ogden himself escaped from it, making his way to the Governor of Pennsylvania, to obtain re-enforcement. On the 11th of August Butler summoned the garrison to surrender, which it felt compelled to do. On the 14th a force, sent from Philadelphia to relieve the fort, had arrived within two miles of it ; but it was too late. The Connecticut people held the valley ever after.

Seldom, if ever, was a country so fought for or suffered for as this. Without taking into account the assault by Indians in 1763, when, after a frightful carnage, the whole residue of the inhabitants were compelled to abandon it entirely, and without anticipating the mention of a far more awful ruin inflicted upon it in 1778, but confining the view to the conflicts between the Connecticut settlers and the government of Pennsylvania, in the brief period of two and a half years, from February, 1769, to August, 1771, four times the Connecticut men were expelled, and four times they returned, the last to a final triumph. Each time they traversed a distance of two hundred and fifty miles, through woods and over mountains. The indestructible energy, unconquerable resolution, and heroic bravery they evinced, were characteristic of, and do honor to, their race. These fluctuating events, in the warfare for dominion over the Valley, illustrated indeed the bravery and prowess of both contending parties. They were accompanied, all along, by much loss of life, alternate destruction of property, and untold personal hardships and sufferings.

After this the Connecticut settlers held the country without serious molestation from Pennsylvania, with the

exception of an attack made from the county contiguous to them, lower down the river, the Sheriff of which, at the head of a large body of men, endeavored to reach Wyoming, but was easily repulsed. Once more, too, the Governor of Pennsylvania attempted to dislodge them, but in vain. He raised a more powerful force than ever before ; but the brave settlers ambuscaded it on its approach, defeated, and effectually repulsed it. The government of that Province came to the conclusion that there was no use in trying to subjugate the Wyoming people. A then pathless forest lay between the seat of government and more peopled districts and that settlement. Its inhabitants, too, had become so formidable in numbers and spirit as to make it inexpedient to attempt to subdue them by any organized movement in arms against their forts, hamlets, or farms. Neither could Pennsylvania extend her civil jurisdiction over them. Any one appearing to execute legal processes, by her authority, was met by prompt and defiant resistance. No sheriff or tax-gatherer of hers was suffered to enter the territory. It held itself free from Pennsylvania, and practically was equally free from Connecticut, the great distance of which prevented the settlers being reached by an arm of power, or, as was sadly acknowledged at a future crisis, of protection. The two contesting governments could do little more than pass declaratory resolutions and inoperative legislative acts. Some local skirmishes and small affrays may have taken place here and there, occasionally, but no considerable move was made or incident occurred to disturb the quiet or independence of the people.

The period between 1771 and 1778 were the halcyon days of Wyoming. Its fields were clothed with beauty, and gave forth their abundance. The community combined and exhibited all the elements of a republic and a democracy. Without the artificial and costly machinery of other governments, the people themselves exercised all the healthy and desirable functions of a legislature, executive, and judiciary.

The all-absorbing discussions and agitations that were for some years drawing the Colonies into the vortex of a fearful, fast-approaching, and desperate conflict in arms with the mother country, diverted attention from these distant backwoodsmen ; and they were left for the time in neglect, contentment, and prosperity.

During this interval they increased and multiplied wonderfully. The beautiful features of the region they occupied, the fertility of its soil, and the excellent state of morals and manners among them, attracted many to join them. It is understood that the story of the Arcadian pastoral simplicity and happy tranquillity of their lives, enjoying an independence in their condition beyond the power of any exterior government, and realizing the fondest dreams of agricultural felicity and liberty, was borne to distant lands, and drew emigrants from foreign nations to share their favored lot. The Transatlantic poet, while meditating upon the tragic horrors that subsequently burst upon this devoted people, gave utterance to the traditions that had reached his ears of their previous happiness.

“ On Susquehanna’s side, fair Wyoming !
Although the wild-flower, on thy ruined wall,
And roofless homes, a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall ;

Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
 That see the Atlantic wave thy morn restore,
 Sweet land ! may I thy lost delights recall,
 And paint thy Gertrude in her bowers of yore,
 Whose beauty was the love of Pennsylvania's shore."

" That Pennsylvanian home,
 With all its picturesque and balmy grace,
 And fields that were a luxury to roam."

" Delightful Wyoming ! beneath thy skies,
 The happy shepherd swains had nought to do
 But feed their flocks on green declivities."

The poet goes on to specify the different nationalities, gathered harmoniously on this then favored spot.

" For here the exile met from every clime,
 And spoke in friendship every distant tongue
 Men from the blood of warring Europe sprung
 Were but divided by the running brook."

" The blue-eyed German changed his sword to pruning-hook.
 Not far, some Andalusian saraband
 Would sound to many a native roundelay."

" Alas ! poor Caledonia's mountaineer
 That want's stern edict e'er, and feudal grief,
 Had forced him from a home he loved so dear !
 Yet found he here a home and glad relief."

" And England sent her men, of men the chief,
 Who taught those sires of Empire, yet to be,
 To plant the tree of life, — to plant fair Freedom's tree."

However much allowance is to be made for the enthusiasm or the fancy of the poet, it is not to be doubted that the Wyoming settlement was, at this particular period, a favorite point to which immigration turned. The names of its inhabitants, which have happened to be mentioned, have a considerable admixture, indicating a foreign and various origin. Neither is it to be doubted that the settlement experienced a rapid and marvelously happy and vigorous growth. The facts and figures of history prove this. At the opening of the

Revolutionary war it was divided into several townships, and some estimate may be formed of its population from the statement made at the time, that it sent a thousand men to serve in the Continental army.*

But so far as its condition had become desirable from the circumstance that it had no government to sustain, except for mere neighborhood regulations, paid no taxes to either State that claimed it, and kept itself free from the control of both of them, it was soon called to pay dearly for the privilege. While it repelled their power, it lost their protection. When the hour of danger came no help could be expected from either; and when Congress was appealed to, the reply was that, until it was agreed to which State they belonged, it was difficult for the United States, as such, to know how to act in the premises. Congress made the most earnest appeals to all concerned to settle their disagreements, but without effect, as neither party was willing to recede from its

* This estimate of the population in round numbers was made by writers of the Revolutionary period. It is not by any means certain that it was an over-estimate. An aggregate enumeration of the people, about the time that war broke out, not including, however, the entire territory, gave 2,500. But owing to the peculiar circumstances in the history of the Valley, the proportion of males was very much greater than in ordinary communities. Many of the females, driven at different times out of the settlements, had not returned. Adventurous young men constituted a large part of the population. From the numbers enrolled in the several companies raised there, the frequent mention of considerable parties of recruits in the place, the fact that men had gone thence and joined companies enlisted elsewhere, and that there were about three hundred old men and youth brought into array, at the fatal day of the 3d of July, 1778, it is not improbable, all things considered, that Wyoming afforded to the country, in the period of the Revolution, not far from 1,000 men. They were in many of the hardest fought battles of the war. The number known to have been slain gives countenance to that figure, so also does the fact that on the 4th of September, 1832, more than fifty years after the armies of the Revolution were raised, thirty-one soldiers who had served in those armies, belonging to Luzerne County, met in the Court-house at Wilkesbarre. There were other Revolutionary soldiers, not at the meeting, then living in the county.

pretensions, and the Valley remained independent but exposed. Suffering no outside jurisdiction, it could not expect outside defence. This made it helpless to resist the storm of war then raging over the Continent, and in fact attracted the bolt that fell upon it. The undefended and indefensible condition of the Wyoming settlement was seen by the common enemy, and may be considered as the occasion of a ruin more terrible than any other part of the country experienced. The destruction of the Wyoming settlement in 1778 may therefore be regarded as part and parcel of the land controversy, which it is the purpose of this chapter to sketch.

Lieutenant-Colonel John Butler, living, at the opening of the Revolution, on the Mohawk, a Loyalist and Refugee, in command of British troops, was stationed in the West, with his head-quarters at Niagara. He was an active officer; and devoted himself to acquiring an ascendancy over surrounding Indian tribes, with the view of rendering them hostile to the United States, and consolidating their strength on the side of the mother country. He held counsel with their great chieftain, Brant, and other heads of tribes. The question where, when, and how, to strike the American Colonies and settlements, was the subject of consideration among them, and led to frequent expeditions and assaults. In 1778, a powerful blow was concerted and effected. The point of attack was the Wyoming villages, at which they directly aimed, and by rapid movements reached, taking them almost entirely by surprise. The force led by Butler, all told, was supposed to be 1,600 men, consisting of British regulars, armed Tories, and Indian warriors starting with it or

joining on the way. They seem to have traversed the intervening country, then a wilderness, in a straight direction to their mark, and had nearly reached it before intelligence of their approach was received. The suspicions and alarm of the settlers were first roused by noticing the disappearance of certain violent Tories, of whom there had been a number among them, — a very few belonging to their original company, most of them miscellaneous immigrants from various quarters. They had, in fact, gone to meet and co-operate with the invaders. The arrival of Butler and his hordes of allies, at Tioga, was soon announced, and the settlers prepared for defence. Most of their able-bodied men were absent in the Continental army. But the elderly men and invalids, and boys old enough to serve, flew to arms. Organization was necessary, but the time was short.

Lieutenant-Colonel Zebulon Butler, whose regiment was connected with the main body of the Continental army, happened, at this time, to be at home on a visit of a few days. The whole body of the people, with such military persons as were among them, unanimately begged him to assume command, which he did. So that the singular coincidence occurred that the two armies were led by men of the same name, title, and rank. They were gallant and able officers, and, as was believed by some, both natives of Connecticut, but always of opposite politics.

Zebulon Butler was born at Lyme in Connecticut, in 1731. In the Colonial war against the French and Indians, he entered the army as an Ensign, and rose to the rank of Captain, when he resigned his com-

mission. He had seen much service, and was an experienced soldier, having been at Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and in the expedition to Havana. He had fixed his home at Wyoming in 1769, and led back from Connecticut the force that in 1771 finally recovered it.

Colonel John Butler, having prior to the Revolution lived for some time in the Mohawk Valley, where he had a large estate, must have known all about the Wyoming land controversy, and in this is seen the reason why that point was selected for his attack. He knew that the settlements were unprotected, that neither Pennsylvania nor Connecticut could come to their aid, and that Congress had not taken them under its wing. Further, it may be supposed that he was actuated by that violence of hatred and resentment, which the rough usage they had met with had aroused in the breasts of some of the Tories. As he could not reach Connecticut, against which, if he had been driven from it, he may have been aggravated, possibly he took particular satisfaction in striking at this off-shoot of that Colony. This may explain why he was willing to lead such a barbarous onslaught upon a people of his own lineage.

Upon assuming command Colonel Zebulon Butler immediately made all possible preparations to resist the approaching foe. He was aided in his arrangements by Colonel Denison of the Wyoming militia, Lieutenant-Colonel Dorrance, and some officers of the Continental army who happened to arrive at the moment. He gathered as many of the women and children, as could be collected, into a fort. On the 2d of July the enemy entered the Valley and slaughtered some of the out-set-

tlers. On the morning of the 3d a messenger was despatched to Colonel Pickering of the Board of War, informing him of the impending danger and calling for aid. Dividing his force of about three hundred men, including the aged and the young, into six companies, Butler marched out, about noon, and the battle commenced. It was a hotly contested fight, and might, as has been thought, have resulted in a victory of the settlers, notwithstanding the disparity of force, had not an order, given by the Captain of one of the companies, been misunderstood. Seeing the necessity of altering the position of his men to protect them, at a particular crisis of the battle, from a cross-fire, and to make their own fire more effective, he directed them to fall back. The order and the movement were misinterpreted into a retreat, which at once took effect: confusion, disorder, and panic prevailed. The mischief was irretrievable, and a general rout the result. The slaughter that ensued was dreadful. Denison and a remnant of his command succeeded in regaining the fort, which, however, he was compelled to surrender the next day. Carnage and conflagration reigned throughout the Valley. The houses of all except the Tories were burned. It was said that, during the fight and afterwards, nearly two hundred of the women of Wyoming were made widows. Such as survived, including those surrendered with the fort, fled to the woods, and made their way to Connecticut or elsewhere. The sufferings of the fugitives, mostly women and children, on their way, were extreme. With but few men to guide and guard them, without shelter or provisions, of all ages and conditions of health or strength, the tales that were told of their en-

durances, among the mountains and in the wilderness, make their story one of the saddest and most tragical in the annals of history. As such it has ever been regarded.

Colonel Zebulon Butler effected his escape from the Valley, and despatched an account of the catastrophe to Colonel Pickering, whose letters in reply to those of Butler are here given. They illustrate what has been said, as to the fact that both Pennsylvania and Connecticut were incapable of rendering aid to prevent the mischief, in consequence of the controversy, to which they were the parties, about the jurisdiction over that territory. Connecticut men in Congress were, as Pickering says, "at a loss" to know what they could do in the crisis, and Pennsylvania was powerless at that point of her frontier. Colonel John Butler well knew that the circumstances of that territory were "singular" in this respect; and, for this reason, he selected it as the point of attack.

"WAR OFFICE, July 10th, 1778.

"SIR,

"I received your letter of the 3d instant, relative to the invasion of the Indians, and have since heard the engagement you expected, actually took place, and greatly to the advantage of the enemy. The letter, with the additional information, was laid before Congress, and I hoped they would have given some order for relieving you; but, as yet, nothing has been done. Congress have been engaged in business of very great consequence. I have conversed with the delegates from Connecticut, but they, as well as others, are at a loss to determine what measures are best to be pursued. A small force of Continental troops, unless joined by the militia of this State, would be unequal to the enemy invading you; and to detach a large force from the army may be inconvenient; and either would probably arrive too late; for the enemy will not stay long in your borders, especially when they are informed

that the British have evacuated Philadelphia, and that, in their retreat through the Jerseys, we gained a victory over them, in which, and by desertions since they left the city, and fatigues and skirmishes on their march, they have lost full three thousand men. I am anxious to hear of your present situation, which I hope is not so dangerous as the last reports represented it. If the enemy have invested your fort, and you can hold it long enough, surely Congress will order up a force, sufficient to relieve you. The savages, I trust, will ere long find sufficient employment in their own countries, and repent of their union with the falling power of Britain; for, if the Indians persist in their hostilities, the resentment of the United States will not cool till those barbarians are exterminated from the earth. I hope soon to receive further information of the state of your settlement. This afternoon there will be a board, for the express purpose of devising some measures for your assistance.

“I am, Sir, yours,

“T. PICKERING.”

“SIR,

“WAR OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA, July 15th, 1778.

“Your melancholy account of the fate of Wyoming, I received by Mr. Williams. I regret that measures were not earlier taken for the relief of that and the other settlements on the frontiers. Something effectual would have been done, in any other State than this, by the people themselves or their executive power. But the circumstances of this State are singular on many accounts. At length orders are issued for assembling immediately considerable bodies of militia at Standing Stone, Sunbury, and Easton. The latter I hope will be strengthened by the Jersey militia, which, I hear, have been ordered out against the Indians. The Commissary has been directed to appoint proper persons to supply these troops with provisions. To encourage the militia, and to give some certain and immediate relief to the frontiers, Colonel Hartley's regiment is ordered to march to Sunbury (for 'tis apprehended the enemy from Wyoming will take that course), except a detachment of about eighty, who escorted some prisoners of war to Brunswick, and will march from

thence to Easton, as soon as the express, who set off this morning, can reach them. At Easton they will receive further orders, either to join their regiment at Sunbury, or the troops on Delaware, as the movements of the enemy shall render expedient.

“We are informed that Colonel Kowatz, with part of General Pulaski’s corps is at Fort Penn. Captain Spaulding’s company, you hear, is on Delaware: I should think it advisable for you, with such troops as are with you, to join it. You will co-operate with the Continental troops and militia which shall be collected, and concert with the commanding officers the most effectual measures for stopping the further ravages of the enemy. You can best judge on the spot to what quarter you should march; the numbers and movements of the enemy must direct you. I am convinced that motives of honor, as well as duty, will prompt you to exert your utmost ability to promote the common good, and save the distressed frontier. Ammunition and some arms will be sent to the different frontier counties, as soon as the Council of this State have informed the Board what quantities they shall want for the militia, 1,900 of whom they have ordered out in the whole.

“I have the satisfaction to inform you that Monsieur Girard, Minister from the Court of France, is arrived here. He came in a fleet of men-of-war, commanded by the Count D’Estaing, of which eleven are capital ships. This fleet is, before this time, arrived at Sandy Hook, and we hope soon to hear of the capture of the British fleet, which is greatly inferior to that of the French. General Washington, with the main army, is probably now crossing the North River. There is the highest reason to believe that he, by land, and the French Admiral by sea, will coop up the enemy at New York, and make prisoners of the whole. We shall then be at leisure to chastise the savages, and the barbarous villains who have led and joined them in laying waste our frontiers.

“I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

“T. PICKERING.

“LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ZEBULON BUTLER.”

Incidental expressions, and the general tenor of these letters, show the bearing of the controversy for the Wyoming territory upon the military operations of the time, and its effect in rendering that frontier defenceless. Congress was prevented from exercising such powers as it had. It was composed of delegates from the States severally, and had no pretence of jurisdiction outside of them. It was a question, then undecided, to which of two of its equal component States the territory belonged. It was felt to be inexpedient for Congress to incur the dissatisfaction of either of them. It withheld from attempting to adjudge, much more from taking action against, one or the other. The Commander-in-Chief had to pursue the same line of action. Pennsylvania could not shelter the territory, because its inhabitants did not suffer her to extend her authority, civil or military, over them. It is not to be charged to her discredit, therefore, that, as Pickering says, the Wyoming massacre could not have occurred in any other State. She was not to blame for it. The singular circumstance in her position, to which he chiefly alluded, was that she was not allowed to make any effectual resistance to the invaders. Neither the militia of her other counties, nor any force organized by her Executive, could hold, or pass the bounds of, the disputed region. They had tried it, over and over again, and been repulsed. The delegates from Connecticut would have objected to the occupation of the settlement by an armed force from Pennsylvania on any pretext; and, when the crisis came, they did not call upon that State to go to the rescue, but were "at a loss" what to advise or devise. It appears, further, that

when Congress was compelled, by the horrible atrocities committed at Wyoming, to repel the British with their savage allies, from the country, and organized a large force to do it, they did not send it into the Valley, but appointed the several rendezvous of the troops at points quite distant from Wyoming, — at Easton, in the county of Northampton; Sunbury, in the county of Northumberland, just within the southern line of the district claimed by the settlers; and at Standing Stone, in the county of Bradford and not far within its northern line, — each some sixty miles from the centre and heart of the settlement. So unwilling was the government of the United States, even then, to do any thing that would compromise the policy of neutral inaction and non-interference. It will be seen that General Washington, some years afterwards, felt it necessary, in conformity with instructions from Congress to this effect, to follow the same course in his military orders and proceedings.

These facts and considerations are presented as required by justice to Congress, and to the administration and people of Pennsylvania, in explanation of their inaction on the emergency. The invasion of the country by the British and Indians, at that particular point, and their dreadful outrages in the Valley; their being permitted to accomplish the fell design, and to escape unpunished at the time, — are wholly owing to the controversy between Pennsylvania and Connecticut. The responsibility and the blame are due to the parties to that controversy as such, and to them alone.

The main body of the enemy's force left the country after completing its devastation. A few of the surviving

settlers came back, but it was found to be unsafe. They were shot down in the fields by savages, who remained in small parties prowling stealthily through the woods. The Valley continued substantially depopulated during the year.

Captain Spaulding, mentioned by Colonel Pickering, immediately marched to the deserted territory, and strengthened the fort. He was a Wyoming man. Colonel Hartley, according to orders given him, as stated by Pickering, marched his regiment, which was of the Pennsylvania line, to Sunbury. The strong language in which Pickering urged Colonel Zebulon Butler, with such of the Wyoming men as had escaped and could be collected, to "co-operate" with Hartley "for the common good, and save the distressed frontier," is noticeable. Butler felt the appeal to his "motives of honor as well as duty," and all questions of jurisdiction were forgotten. At the head of his Wyoming men, he joined Hartley, and, with their united forces, they scoured the Valley. In Bradford county, they fought and defeated a part of the Indian army that had been left there, dispersed them, and recovered some of the plunder that had been brought from Wyoming. By the close of September they had driven the Indians out of the Valley, and Hartley left the territory.

The government of the United States now concluded that strong measures had become necessary to give security to the frontiers, and prevent such attacks for the future. Congress, the Board of War, and the Commander-in-Chief, upon full consideration and consultation, matured their plans. The expedition, under General John Sullivan, was organized so as to take the

field the next year. It moved in two divisions, — one through New York, under General Clinton: the main body under Sullivan's immediate command. A part of his force ascended the Susquehanna in boats; and part crossed the country on a road which it built as it advanced from Easton, through Stoddardsville, passing the Blue Mountains at Wind-gap, a remarkable depression on their summit, and reaching Wyoming, June 23d, 1779; its place of rendezvous. After encamping there for some time, preparations were completed, and Sullivan started on the work assigned him. The troops marched by the banks, and the boats ascended the river. They came out of their encampment on the 31st of July, with a salvo of artillery, and proceeded under the inspiring strains of lively martial music, which, however, was changed to dirge and dead-march, as they reached and slowly moved over the battle-field and slaughter-ground of the year before. On the 22d of August, Clinton joined the column at Tioga; and the entire army of Sullivan, amounting to four thousand men, advanced to administer effectual chastisement to the Indians. The savages, under Brant, aided by the British under Sir John Johnson, John Butler, and other Tory leaders, made resolute resistance. Much hard and long fighting took place, but Sullivan finally conquered and scattered them. He then swept through the country to the Genessee River, destroying on his path, and far and wide, the camps, crops, stores, and houses of the Indians. The punishment was complete. It struck terror through all the tribes, and impressed them with a salutary sense of the power of the United States. Indian forays, under British guidance, took place afterwards on different frontier

settlements, but none so formidable or destructive as that against Wyoming, in 1778. The Valley itself was thenceforth secure from any considerable assault, although occasional irregular and murderous inroads were made by small parties of savages.

The expedition under Sullivan accomplished its purpose. Some complained of the slowness of its preparation. Few realize the extent of the arrangements necessary to move a large army, with its provisions, equipments, and appendages through a wide wilderness. Sullivan was wise in not starting until he was ready. Others complained that he did not carry havoc farther, and extend his march to Niagara. But there were good and sufficient reasons for his stopping and returning when he did. The longer absence of so large a portion of the Continental army from the chief fields of its operations was not expedient. Upon the whole, this Indian campaign was most useful, and its entire conduct reflects the highest credit upon its commander and all under his orders.

No part of the military history of the Revolution is less appreciated or more misunderstood than this. It is regarded as an eccentric diversion from the regular course of the war. It is looked upon as an unwarranted and needless devastation of Indian settlements. Some persons are horrified by the utter destruction Sullivan dealt upon the cornfields and habitations of the tribes, forgetting that in this he pursued literally the instructions of Washington. No conqueror in the annals of history took fewer lives of an enemy, except on the battle-field; although he had the greatest possible provocation. A valuable officer and a private soldier fell, after a gallant resistance,

into the hands of the savages. From the condition of their bodies, found shortly, it appeared that they had been put to death, after tortures and mutilations such as have never been surpassed, if ever paralleled, by even Indian cruelty. The forbearance and humanity of Sullivan's course deserves to be held in honorable remembrance ; and there is no occasion whatever for the regret that has been expressed that " the veil of forgetfulness cannot be drawn over it."

All these criticisms upon the expedition under Sullivan are in consequence of not understanding its connection with the Wyoming massacre. That was its occasion and its origin, and led Congress, the Board of War, and General Washington to feel it necessary to strike just such a blow as Sullivan did, upon the five tribes, usually designated as the " Six Nations,"— who, led by British officers, and in concert with British regulars and Tories, had perpetrated the outrage upon Wyoming,—and thus render them incapable of repeating it there or elsewhere. The march of Sullivan's army was not the expression of revenge, but an act of self-preservation. No government is worthy of the name, which does not secure the safety and protection of its people. The alternative was whether the savage tribes in Central and Western New York, in alliance with the public enemy, should be disabled for further mischief, or families of civilized men, women, and children, on the frontiers and within the limits of the American Confederation, be indiscriminately and brutally destroyed. The Congress of the United States did no more than its duty in choosing the first course.

The Commander-in-Chief was responsible for the expe-

dition. He probably designed it, and certainly superintended the preparations for it, with great care and interest. He saw that it was needed. It was one of those blows which Washington occasionally dealt, and it was not dealt in vain. The strong arm of the country, thus wielded by him, was felt through all the Indian tribes, and the name they thenceforth gave to him, — "The Town Destroyer," — was expressive, not of resentment or reproach, but of wondering and admiring awe.

General Sullivan, on his return march, again pitched his tents at Wyoming on the 7th of October, 1779, just sixty-eight days from his departure; and the sound of public war never more crossed the borders of the Valley, whether from savage or civilized foe. Fugitives could now return in safety; but long years passed before Wyoming recovered its prosperity.

The controversy between the settlers and Pennsylvania, however, was immediately renewed, in which the delegates in Congress of the contesting States earnestly engaged.

Colonel Zebulon Butler, as has been seen, was a Connecticut settler, and led from that State the force which had last recovered the possession of the Valley. He served with great distinction in Sullivan's expedition, was in the Continental army, and the military commander of the Wyoming district. The following letter from Washington, removing him from that post, shows the influence, to which the government had to yield, of the parties to the controversy at the end of the year 1780. Captain Ramson's company, although belonging to the Continental army, was wholly composed of Wyoming men: —

TO COLONEL ZEBULON BUTLER.

" NEW-WINDSOR, 29 December, 1780.

" SIR,

" Congress having, in order to remove all cause of jealousy and discontent between the States of Pennsylvania and Connecticut, directed me to withdraw the present garrison of Wyoming, and to replace them with troops from the Continental army, not belonging to the line of Pennsylvania or Connecticut, or citizens of either of the said States; I have for that purpose ordered Captain Mitchell, of the Jersey line, to relieve you. You will, therefore, upon his arrival, deliver up the post to him, and march with all the men at present under your command, and join the army in the neighborhood of this place. I am well aware of the difficulty which there will be of bringing away the men of Ransom's company; but I trust, and shall expect, that you will exert yourself to do it effectually; because, if they remain behind in any numbers, it would seem like an intention to evade the resolve above cited. You will, before you march, give Captain Mitchell every necessary information respecting the situation of the country, and make him acquainted with those characters upon whom he can depend for advice and intelligence, in case of an incursion of the enemy. I am, &c.,

" GEORGE WASHINGTON, &c."

The Ninth Article of Agreement upon which the Confederation of the United States was formed, contained a provision, most carefully and wisely framed, for the adjustment of differences between particular States, by a tribunal to be raised, as cases occurred, with power to decide upon them. This was the only form of a national judiciary, prior to the establishment of the present Constitution. On the application of Pennsylvania to Congress, such a tribunal was erected to settle the controversy to which State the Wyoming territory belonged. It convened at Trenton, in New Jersey, in

the latter part of the year 1782. Connecticut recognized its authority and appeared before it. This special court was of final jurisdiction. There could be no reversal of its judgment, and from its decision there was no appeal. There appears to have been a thorough hearing of the case; and, after a session of five weeks, judgment was rendered in favor of Pennsylvania.

This ended the Wyoming controversy between the two States. It ought to have ended strife, and given peace at once and for ever to the unhappy valley; but it did not.

The government of Pennsylvania ought instantly to have quieted the Connecticut settlers in the possession of their farms with their improvements. The affections and allegiance of such a people would have been worth more than all their lands. But other counsels prevailed, and a new chapter of disorders and troubles was opened, with which, at their height and in their conclusion, the subject of this biography will be found most remarkably connected.

The controversy, as between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, having thus reached its termination, a final retrospective glance over it may here be taken, and some general remarks, as to the course of the contending parties during its progress, with propriety be offered.

They both, undoubtedly, felt all along equally confident of being in the right. This accounts for their pertinacity and determination not to recede or concede at any moment, in any crisis, or to the slightest extent. This was not an unreasonable obstinacy. Although a High Court gave, as it had to do, a decision, the case had such inherent difficulties and perplexities that dif-

fering judgments will always exist as to its merits. It will be looked upon in opposite lights. No blame can, therefore, attach to the parties at the time for each having most decided opinions relating to it. It cannot be questioned that they proved the sincerity and depth of their respective convictions by the constancy with which they clung to them and suffered for them, during the period of an entire generation. The greatest heroism and prowess were exhibited on both sides. Much blood was shed, and the contests were often close and severe; but no inhumanity was exhibited. The struggle was strenuous, often repeated, long protracted, and its fluctuating tides swept the whole population over and over again from their homes, involving them alternately in exile and ruin; but no barbarity seems to have been practised, and no fiendish passions engendered. Prisoners were always kindly cared for.

Pennsylvania has been sometimes blamed for not having used more decisive and violent measures to demolish and exterminate the intruders upon her soil. It is said that she ought to have sent a force at the beginning to crush them out, and by stern and exemplary punishment have intimidated them from ever again coming within her boundaries.

But taking into view the state of the country, the difficulty of reaching Wyoming with a large force, and the then existing embarrassments in the political organization of Pennsylvania, it must be concluded that she did as much as could have been expected of her; and, considering the character of the people against whom she was acting, it is to be doubted whether they could have been awed by any vindictiveness practised upon

those of them falling into her hands. What might have frightened some men would only have exasperated them. No bloody revenge would have answered the purpose. The infliction of extreme penalties would have led to fearful retaliation, on the next turn of fortune, aggravated the horrors of the strife, planted ineradicably the seeds of hatred, and led to mischiefs that would have been felt to the latest time. The lenient course of Pennsylvania, during the several stages of the controversy with Connecticut, reflects honor upon her wisdom as well as humanity. At different times she took many of the settlers in battle or skirmish, and held them as prisoners in her jails at Easton or elsewhere, among them several of their leaders. She did not execute upon them any military or judicial penalties. She treated them not as wicked, but as misguided, men, allowing them to be discharged. Such a course may have been called "imbecility" by some, but is entitled, in the judgment of enlightened statesmen and philanthropists,—and will be more and more so as the world advances,—to commendation and honor, reflecting the truest glory on the character of Pennsylvania. Upon the whole, no conflict in arms, protracted through such a period of years, and accompanied by so much provocation, is so little stained by cruelty and vindictiveness, or has a better record of the bravery, resolution, or endurance of the combatants, than the long fight for jurisdiction over the Wyoming lands.

As for the settlers, no censure of their character or general conduct is associated necessarily with the judgment of the court. They felt that they had been wronged in the matter of the purchase of the lands from

the Indians; they knew that they had acted in good faith in the transaction, and nothing could remove their conviction that the "Six Nations," in a subsequent council, had been tampered with, and unfairly induced to disavow the sale. As for the dispute between their State and Pennsylvania for jurisdiction over the territory, they knew that the charter of the former was prior in date, and in other respects of superior validity. The claimants under the grant to William Penn were his descendants and heirs, a private person, so to speak, living for the most part out of the country. A prejudice became deeply fixed in the minds of these hardy backwoodsmen against the pretensions of a non-resident foreign aristocracy of the closest kind, consisting, indeed, of but a single family, to govern them and a territory belonging to their State by chartered right, which had been honestly purchased of the aboriginal proprietors, and further made their own by the sweat of their brows; which, by the endurance of every hardship, had been reclaimed from a wild forest, and converted, by the labors of a generation, into fertile fields and beautiful farms. In all the early stages of the controversy, this feeling against the pretensions of the Penns had been shared with them by a large portion of the people of Pennsylvania, who, with all settlers everywhere, in all parts of that State, from whatever colonies or countries they had come, were in the habit of speaking in derision of those countenancing the claims of the Penn family as "Pennamites," or "Pennymites," which latter had become the prevalent popular term.

To account for the strength of the sensibilities and passions with which the settlers were imbued, it is

necessary to realize their circumstances and conditions. Persons living in a wilderness, far remote from organized communities, without means of communication with the rest of the world, are apt to acquire a spirit of independence, making them disregardful of the artificial restraints that have to be recognized in more crowded states of society. They know nothing of the tribunals, and care nothing for the technicalities of law. He who, by his own axe and plough, has transformed the acres, within which his daily and yearly life is bounded, from a pathless, worthless forest into a cultivated and productive enclosure, feels that he owns it by a title better than all written documents or recorded deeds. His farm, his house, his barns; all that he has, thinks of, or cares about,—is literally the work of his own hands, his sole creation. No other man has contributed to it; and it is hard to make him understand that any other man, be he called what he may,—governor, proprietor, legislator, judge, or sheriff,—has a right to take his land from under his feet. He will hold to it as his life, and fight for it against the world. If any sense of wrong done or threatened gets a lodgement in his breast, it rankles there, under the gloomy shadows of his lone wilderness abode; and if neighbors, who may sometimes seek his clearing through forest paths, have similar feelings, they are deepened and exasperated by occasional communings. Men scattered here and there over a tract of territory which no organized force, civil or military, can easily penetrate, actuated by similar interests and passions, become resolute, earnest, daring, and unconquerable. Such were the Connecticut settlers. For a quarter of a century they had bid defiance to the Penn proprietors and to Pennsylvania.

In the mean time those lands had become more and more endeared to them by every principle of association, every habit of homely life, every trial, and every peril. By their toil and energy they had been reclaimed from the rugged wilderness of nature and converted into smooth lawns and verdant meadows of marvellous beauty and loveliness. Adventurers from other colonies and other lands had, one by one, been drawn into their company, attracted by tales of world-wide currency, portraying the charming aspect of the country, the excellence of its soil for the culture of grains and fruit, and every attribute that can adorn a landscape, and give reward to industry. It was not only endeared to its occupants by the attachments now mentioned, but consecrated by special experiences of blood and woe, that have riveted on them the sympathies of mankind, perpetuated in the hearts of all coming generations by verses of foreign and native bards that will never die. The devastations of their fields, the conflagrations of their dwellings and barns, and the repeated massacre of their people, men, women, and children, by savage hordes,—all these combined could not destroy or weaken the tenacity with which they clung to their lands. Those who escaped the tomahawk and scalping-knife, had come back, over and over again, from their places of refuge. The invincible, indestructible community persevered in its contest against all odds; and no power, civilized or barbarian, could root it out.

Finally, in this brief review of the Wyoming controversy between two States,—of which an account is necessary in a biography of Timothy Pickering, from his agency, as shown in the letters he wrote to Zebulon

Butler, and his participation as a member of the Board of War in Sullivan's expedition, but especially, as will be seen, from his connection with the convulsions that followed it, — upon balancing the facts and evidence, we are brought, not to the conclusion usually the result of a fair consideration of the whole subject in like cases, that both parties were in the wrong, but that both were substantially in the right. So far as the original charters were to decide the question, each party felt its title to be good. The purchases made of Indians, and the disavowals of them by Indians, left no solid ground for either party to stand on. There was nothing in their general conduct, during the progress of the controversy, to leave special reproach upon either. The court decided it legally and practically, but neither their decision nor the verdict of the historian can precisely strike the balance of right and wrong, in a moral estimate, between them.

While such apologies may be suggested for the course of the contending parties, and as to their conduct generally, so long as the question of jurisdiction remained undecided; after the decision, they took measures, and were led into positions, that cannot be justified.

Pennsylvania, instead of conceding to the settlers their right to the lands they had reclaimed, and the houses they had built and occupied for such a length of years, gave notice of her purpose to take possession of them all. The utmost that she proposed to do, for their relief or redress, was to procure for them some territory, such as she might judge equivalent, in some far-off wilderness. She proceeded to garrison the forts, stationing a menacing force in them, and to put into operation

the machinery, military and civil, by which to eject them from their homes, and carry out her harsh and cruel policy. It cannot be defended, and was as unwise as it was inhuman. The common sense and moral rectitude of her own people finally repudiated it, and would have done so at once, had not the reaction in favor of the settlers been checked by their rash conduct, or rather that of their principal leaders.

The course of the government of Pennsylvania, in confiscating the lands of the Connecticut settlers, has no justification in the decree of the court at Trenton. On the contrary, the question of the tenure of the lands by those then in the occupancy of them did not come before that tribunal, as was expressly declared in the proceedings at the time, and in the judgment rendered. The members of the court severally affirmed this afterwards. The question submitted to them, and on which alone they decided, was not of property or ownership, but merely of jurisdiction. The rights of the settlers to their particular farms or lots were in no degree intended to be affected by the Trenton decree, but remained to be determined and adjusted, in the ordinary way, by the proper tribunals, and the regular procedures of the established courts of law and equity.

At first, indeed, the settlers used only legitimate and proper measures of protection. They sent petitions to the legislature of Pennsylvania, praying to be allowed to continue to hold their estates. They also laid their case before Congress by petition, and on the 23d of January, 1784, that body took the initiatory steps required in such cases by the Ninth Article of Confederation. In the mean while altercations were constantly

going on between the people and the soldiery placed among them, and some rash and fiery spirits were inflaming the settlers against the Pennsylvania government.

In the spring of 1784, another awful calamity befell Wyoming. It has been seen that six times, in its troublous and tragical history, it had been depopulated; once by Indians, four times by Pennsylvania, and once by Indians and British. Six vials of destruction had thus been poured out upon it by the wrath of man. The seventh vial, now to be poured out, was as of the wrath of God. A winter of unusual severity, with great and frequent falls of snow, was followed in March by a freshet, such as was never known before or since, on the Susquehanna. At successive points, along the entire length of that river, immense ice-jams were formed, submerging the country immediately above them, and converting the bed of the stream into a series of surging lakes. The people saw their danger; fled, with all they could carry, to neighboring eminences; and watched with horror the terrible spectacle.

The "breaking up" of rivers at spring floods, in these latitudes, is one of the grandest phenomena of nature. Its forewarning is a deep low sound, as of far-off thunder, slowly but steadily increasing; soon there are sharp intonations, like explosions of artillery, by crackings of the ice across and along the river, caused by the swollen current beneath. The water begins to gush or spout up through the crevices, and at the banks. The process taking place, simultaneously, over great distances, makes itself discernible to the ear and eye. The whole frozen covering of the river is seen to move downward, chafing, breaking, and resounding

as it goes. Jams are formed by obstacles in the bed, and at angles or gorges in the course of the stream. The current, thus intercepted, rises into floods, the ice-cakes crash together, slide under or over each other, heap up in piles, and tumble back in the seething waters. The ice-jams far up the river first break, and let loose the dams they had formed, which pour like cataracts upon the dams below ; and the mighty volume, inundating the country far and wide, increases as it bursts its way, bearing on its surface, besides the broken ice, uprooted trees from forests and orchards, and fragments of fences, barns, and houses. The accumulated but released floods rush by in an irresistible torrent, smashing and whirling on every thing in their path. The scene is truly terrible to behold. It is quickly over, but, while it lasts, shakes the air with a roar equal to that of Niagara.

The people of Wyoming, from the hill-tops and mountains, witnessed the destructive spectacle, and saw their dwellings, barns, cattle, and stores swept away. On the subsidence of the inundation they made their way back to homes once more ruined, and again commenced the toils, which they had so often encountered, of restoring wasted fields, and rebuilding habitations ; this time, however, with but little heart or hope, under the impending threat of speedy ejection and lasting expulsion.

This calamity filled their cup to overflowing, and drove many of them to desperation. The memories of their past troubles since they first came to the valley, so constant, diversified, long-continued, and accumulated ; the ill-treatment they were meeting from Pennsylvania now that they had come under her power ; the process of

confiscation that had begun to go into effect ; the deafness of her legislature to all appeals and remonstrances ; and the slow delay with which relief would come from Congress, if it should ever come, — were more than they could bear. Listening to evil counsels, and following passionate leaders, they left the vantage-ground of patient endurance where succor would soon have surely come to them from the sympathy of the country at large, and ultimately of the great body of the people of Pennsylvania itself, took a defiant attitude towards that government, and openly resisted its laws. This was a fatal error. From that moment they became insurgents and rebels. They lost the friends that were rising up in their behalf in Pennsylvania, and whose voices were beginning to be heard in the councils of that State. Its power and pride soon became arrayed against them. Although its proceedings were thought by some not to be as steady as they might have been, but to bear at times the appearance of hesitancy and vacillation, there ought to have been no doubt that its authority would finally prevail.

It must be remembered, however, in mitigation of the folly of those of the settlers who went into this rebellion, that they had been accustomed to follow the guidance of certain land companies in Connecticut, incorporated by the legislature of that State, which had originally purchased those lands from the Indians, and whose members could not relinquish the fancy that they had a prospective pecuniary interest in them. They had sent forward the first emigrants, who held, under titles given by them, and had been enabled by their energetic aid, to recover the territory so often. The settlers had been backed

and re-enforced by the influence and resources of these companies all along. While the question of jurisdiction remained open, the action of those companies, in aiding and sustaining the settlers, was entirely legitimate. But, so far as they continued to instigate resistance to the government of Pennsylvania, after the decision of the court at Trenton, it was unjustifiable and mischievous.

Indeed, there was at that period pervading the country a fearful disregard of the obligations of law, a widespread spirit of insubordination to government in general. The public mind for years, during the Revolutionary war, while the Continent was in rebellion against the Crown of England, had, to some extent, and in many quarters, been getting loose from the idea of political restraints; and it was long before it recovered a healthy allegiance to the authority of government, as is evidenced by insurrectionary proceedings, on a serious scale, in Massachusetts and elsewhere. At that day, the truth had not dawned upon any, and is not even yet fully discerned, that, in a free Republic, rebellion is out of place, absurd, and absolutely sure to fail. Where suffrage is equal and universal, and elections are frequent, the people and the government are identical: there can be nothing to rebel against, and nobody left to rebel. The ballot-box disperses discontent, and heals the diseases of the State. All surplus electricity escapes through it. The people, being the government, will be sure to uphold it. A real Republic, which keeps its sovereignty alive in the hands of the people, is, for this reason, the strongest government in the world, the only one that has in itself the element of perpetuity. Further, it was not then known, as the subsequent experience of the United States has

proved, that a Republic cannot easily be dismembered. It is pervaded by one spirit of life, and cannot be torn apart. Counties cannot sever themselves from States, nor States from the Union.

While there was such a general want of appreciation of the folly and wickedness of a forcible resistance to laws made by the people, and to government resting on the will of the people, it is not to be wondered at that frontiers-men, like the Connecticut settlers at Wyoming, should have been drawn into rebellion. They had little acquaintance with artificial arrangements of society; they had felt the law only as it had attempted, and had succeeded, to subjugate them to an authority they denied. Their peculiar experience had led them to know no other sovereign than their own determined will. They had looked in vain, outside of their own narrow limits, for aid or for justice. Their strong arms and brave hearts had been proved, after many reverses; to be a sufficient wall of defence around them; and they felt that they always would be.

Such men were fit subjects to be instigated to rebellion, and many of them were ready for it. All they wanted was a leader, and he appeared at the crisis. Colonel John Franklin was a native of Connecticut. He had signalized himself by deeds of gallantry on many occasions, was a man of great physical strength, and every way qualified to enlist the confidence and stimulate the passions of men disposed to daring measures. There does not appear to be any evidence against his personal and private character. After the strife was over, he seems to have enjoyed the respect of his fellow-citizens. Of course no weight can be attached to vehement ex-

pressions used against him while the heat and violence of the struggle to subdue him were at their height. He might have been honest in his convictions, although rash in his conduct, and wholly mistaken in his views of what ought to be attempted or could be accomplished by way of insurrection. He organized and kept up resistance to the State government throughout the Valley, and was joined by similar spirits from other States. A considerable number of "Green Mountain Boys," fresh from a similar contest with New York, came in a body; and Ethan Allen himself was there, ready to summon a large force if necessary. The rebellion had, indeed, become formidable; and lawlessness reigned for a time.

The Revolutionary war being closed, and the United States having become, severally, independent and sovereign, Pennsylvania felt her strength and her duty. This insurrection, in a small corner of her great territory, could not be suffered. Her authority, and the peaceful sway of her laws over it, were to be restored at all events, and by whatever force or means. The part Colonel Pickering acted in bringing this about will be shown in the following chapters, as described in letters and documents written by him. In citing them, his strong expressions against John Franklin and others will be given. It is said that subsequently he and Franklin often met on friendly terms.

It may be stated in this connection, and once for all, that, in this memoir of Colonel Pickering, the author is not to be considered as espousing the sentiments he quotes. The duty of the historian is to relate what men did and said, without being at all responsible for their actions or language. Colonel Pickering was a bold,

strenuous, and stern combatant. In this affair, as afterwards in the conflict between the two great parties that divided the nation, and in emergencies that awakened the strongest sensibilities of leading statesmen and the entire people, Colonel Pickering was in the habit of speaking his mind in forcible and emphatic terms: his actions were fearless, and his utterances uncompromising. But while he gave hard blows, and used hard words, he was singularly placable. Time assuaged his feelings towards antagonists. While retaining to the last his sentiments on the political questions and issues in which he had differed from them, he did justice to their merits. In his old age he held most kindly correspondence with some, of whom it will be seen in these volumes, in days of former strife, he expressed himself in the severest terms. Every thinking, candid, and fair mind outlives its prejudices, and often reverses its judgments of men. The passions, which the actors themselves bury, ought not to come to life again in the breasts of their biographers.*

* The material facts, and many interesting details, in the history of Wyoming, and in reference to the great controversy as to jurisdiction over it, with a variety of delineations of its singular experiences of troubles and sufferings, may be gathered from the following works:—

“The History of Wyoming,” by Isaac A. Chapman, a resident of the Valley, published in 1830; an unfinished, posthumous work, pp. 209.

“The Poetry and History of Wyoming,” by William L. Stone, author of the “Life of Brant,” &c. 1840. pp. 406.

“History of Wyoming,” by Charles Miner, 1845. Mr. Miner was long a resident of Wyoming, editor of newspapers, and author of several publications. He represented the district of which it was a part in the Congress of the United States. pp. 592.

“Annals of Luzerne County,” by Stewart Pearce, 1866, pp. 564, a valuable volume.

Besides other works, treating the subject, such as a History of Wyoming, by George Peck, D.D., and of the Lackawanna Valley, by H. Hollister, M.D. Lossing’s “Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution” tells and illustrates the story well.

CHAPTER VIII.

Colonel Pickering organizes the County of Luzerne. Removes his Family to Wyoming.

1786, 1787.

THE disturbances in the Wyoming territory occasioned so much trouble to the authorities of Pennsylvania, were so mischievous in their effects on the condition of the people there, and so seriously retarded the settlement of that part of the country, that it became evident to all considerate persons that, in some way or other, it was necessary, if possible, to bring them to an end. All the ordinary means for reducing or suppressing them, by persuasion or force, had been tried in vain. Forts, garrisons, and processes of law had failed. Some new method had to be contrived.

The subject occupied the thoughts of the public men of the State, and of citizens generally; particularly in Philadelphia. Most of the influential persons there were on intimate terms with Colonel Pickering. The subject, no doubt, constituted a principal topic of frequent conversation. He had come to a final conclusion to remove, with his family, to some new settlement on the frontiers, or to open one himself in the remoter wilderness. With this in view he had purchased several large tracts of unoccupied lands in the extreme western counties of Virginia and beyond, in the territory, then belonging to that State, constituting now the State of

Kentucky, and on the borders of the Ohio. Patents conveying to him these lands are among his papers. This gave him a personal prospective interest in the discussions that led to the ordinances of Congress relating to Western Territories, and occasioned a voluminous correspondence between him and Rufus King, and other prominent persons having that matter in charge. He had also, in company with others, bought a large tract of land in Pennsylvania, which had, on many accounts, greater attractions, as a future permanent home, than more distant localities. But his Pennsylvania purchase was in immediate contact with the Wyoming lands, and in fact, to some extent, overlay them. This tract, however, could hardly be considered a desirable or secure residence for a family while the controversy relating to it remained, preventing the peaceful sway of law and order within its limits. His friends became acquainted with all his purposes, interests, and views, as to the point of destination which he would finally select, — whether to go with Rufus Putnam and others, beyond the Alleghanies; or to the Pennsylvania tract, which, he was free to say, that, were it not for the animosities, and even rebellion raging there, he would prefer. As he always was frank and ingenuous in expressing his ideas, his associates knew exactly the state of his mind on all subjects and all occasions. They saw that the tendency of his preference was for his Pennsylvania lands, and it was at once evident to them that the public interest required it to be determined in that direction. In short, they became convinced that it was of the utmost importance that he should fix his abode there.

The high military positions he had held, and the

honorable part he had borne in the Revolutionary war, were universally known. His energy, courage, and integrity, everywhere appreciated, gave him great influence and weight of character. He was equal to any emergency of personal peril or endurance, requiring physical strength and hardihood, or moral firmness. His philanthropy and love of justice would make him true to the rights and reasonable claims of the inhabitants of the territory, while his stern allegiance to law and government would secure the authority of the State. His exertions as a member of the Board of War, at the time of the Wyoming massacre, to hasten relief in that dreadful crisis, from Congress and the army, were undoubtedly gratefully remembered by the people there. Altogether it was evident that he was just the man to take the management of affairs at Wyoming.

The result of frequent discussions, in the social circle, between him and his distinguished friends in Philadelphia, was that it was agreed that if he removed to Wyoming, all the requisite official powers should be conferred upon him to enforce the authority of the State in placing that district on a solid basis of permanent peace. It was arranged, if he should undertake the task, to prepare the way for its execution. The territory was about to be erected into a distinct county ; and he was assured that the principal civil offices of it should be put into his hands. The whole political and personal influence of the leading characters, addressing these solicitations to him, was pledged to his support, whatever difficulties might be encountered.

The portion of his biography upon which we now enter, will be drawn, for the most part, from his cor-

respondence at the time; from an account of some of its most interesting passages, written by him more than thirty years afterwards; and from various papers and minutes found among his manuscripts.

' Before absolutely and finally committing himself to the Wyoming enterprise, he thought it proper to visit the country. Some gentlemen interested in the measure, and also desirous of a personal inspection of the unsettled lands in that part of the State, offered to accompany him.

There were three routes by which the Wyoming region was then ordinarily reached from Philadelphia, which may here be mentioned. One was to go down the Delaware, land at Wilmington, take the Baltimore road to the Elk, and then ascend by boat the Susquehanna, and follow up its eastern branch from Sunbury. This was the longest, mostly water-borne, but almost wholly against the current. It has the shortest land-carriage, and is the one referred to by Colonel Pickering, when he says that but twenty miles of land-conveyance is necessary between Philadelphia and Wyoming. Another was, following the Delaware up to Easton; from that point crossing the country over the Blue and Pocono Mountains and through Wind-gap. From the hilly character of the country beyond Easton, this was not adapted to heavy transportation. The third route, between these, became the prevalent one, — directly across the country to Middletown, on the Susquehanna, a little below Harrisburg, and from that point up the Susquehanna and its east branch. The land part of this route was long and fatiguing, all transportation of goods over it being in strong, heavy, and lumbering wagons.

Two gentlemen accompanied Colonel Pickering at the start. Others overtook them on the way. As they were not encumbered by much luggage, they did not think it necessary to take either of the three, just mentioned, most travelled and worn routes, as appears by Colonel Pickering's "Journal of a Tour into the Woods of Pennsylvania, about the Great Bend, August and September, 1786." It seems to have been kept daily, and is a curious and most valuable document, giving minute observations of the topography, features, and growths of the country, then mostly in its original wilderness state. It is such as could only have proceeded from a scientific and practical agriculturist.

The party set out from Philadelphia on Friday morning, August 4th, 1786. Lodging at Pottsgrove it reached Reading the next day, and Sunbury on the 8th. It was necessary to go up the Susquehanna, above the junction of the east branch, to meet Mr. S. Wallis, who was to accompany them and conduct their surveys. The arrangement was completed with him, while the party was in the neighborhood of Muncy's Creek, from which point Colonel Pickering addressed the following letter to his wife: —

"Saturday, August 12th, 1786. At Mr. PHILIP FRANCIS's, about a mile below the mouth of Muncy Creek, and three miles below Mr. Wallis's."

"I am informed of a messenger going from Mr. Wallis's to Wilmington, in the Delaware State. I embrace this occasion to inform you that I remain in perfect health. We expected ere this to have been farther advanced on our journey, but Mr. Wallis is to go with us, to complete the surveys of the land we are to visit; and he cannot get ready till next Monday, the 14th, and it will probably take us a week to collect necessities for the surveyor, chain-carriers, &c., and travel

to Tioga; so that my return may be ten days or a fortnight later than I wished or expected when I left home. As Mr. Wallis was not ready, we spent two nights and one day at General Potter's, where we were kindly entertained. Last night and the preceding one we lodged at Mr. Francis's, and shall stay here till we proceed on our journey. Mr. Francis is uncle to Thomas Francis, who is with us. His lady is a lively, agreeable woman, and well calculated for a remote residence in the country. They have the best log-house we have seen, though not yet finished. They have two children, a son and daughter, the eldest about five years old. Mr. F. says, now they have come to the backwoods, they are to have no more."

Writing again to his wife, he says: —

"At Mr. PH. FRANCIS's, Monday Morning, August 4th.

"This day, were to have set off for Tioga, but my horse has wounded himself, and is unable to walk. I am going down to General Potter's to borrow or purchase another, and we shall, doubtless, proceed on our journey to-morrow. I remain in perfect health. The weather has been rather unpleasant for several days on account of the rain, and so cool that last night I slept under two blankets."

The horse was so badly injured that another had to be purchased. The price was £11 10s.

On Tuesday, Messrs. Richard, James, and Charles Willing joined them; so that the party comprised those gentlemen, together with A. Horton and Thomas Francis, who had started with the Colonel from Philadelphia, Mr. Wallis the surveyor, chain-carriers, and some other hired men. They rode to Northumberland that afternoon. On Wednesday, the 16th, after providing some necessary articles, they proceeded to their destination. On Friday, the 18th, they reached, at the close of the day, Wyoming, now Wilkesbarre.

On Monday, August 21st, they left Wyoming, and ascended the river, having hired some canoes to carry supplies of provisions and other articles that could not well be strapped to horses. Much difficulty occurred from the canoes becoming leaky, partly, perhaps, in consequence of overloading, and partly from incidents to which such craft are liable in shallow and rough places, particularly in being propelled against the stream.

The next evening, Dr. Binney and his company joined them. Here the party first pitched their tents.

At noon, Monday, the 28th, they left the river, and set out for the woods, surveying, as they went. They had horses which, however, were mostly used to carry luggage, provisions, tents, instruments, and other accoutrements. But little progress was made from day to day. They camped out, of course, every night. Their provisions were occasionally variegated by game from the woods and brooks. They traversed the whole north-eastern corner of Pennsylvania, crossing mountains, struggling through thick-set forests and bushes, fording streams, remaining under their tents when it rained, and carrying their lines of survey over rocks, gullies, and swamps. After roaming in this way through the wilderness for three weeks, they came out at Haller's Tavern, about two miles south of the Wind-gap, and reached Philadelphia on Wednesday night, September 20th.

When near Tioga, on Saturday, August 26th, Colonel Pickering, having heard that his neighbor in Philadelphia, David Rittenhouse, and Simeon De Witt, of New York, — Commissioners for running the line between their respective States, — were, with their attendants, only a few

miles off, left his party and made them a visit, spending the greater part of the day with them, conferring in reference to the business in which they were all engaged, visiting with them a part of their line, and receiving much valuable information from them.

Colonel Pickering, in his Journal, describes the character and quality of the soil in the different localities he traversed, and of the natural productions of the country in its then wild state. It was richly and heavily timbered with ash, chestnut, white pine, white oak, hemlock, black walnut, and every other variety of trees. The surface was generally uneven, rising at greater or less distances, and in all directions, into hills. Their summits, however, were not always rocky and in ridges, but often spacious levels of the best arable land. He thus speaks of these mountain plains : —

“The land we have passed over this day” [August 31] “is called beechland; yet it contains as much hemlock as beech, not on the sides of steep pitches only, near the runs, but in every part of the land. Though the high grounds in the beechland have been called *broad-backed hills*, yet I had not conceived of them as so broad as I found them; and, when upon them, you would not imagine you were on a hill. This you discover only when you come to the valleys, through which were runs of water. We observed scarcely a rock on the surface; but small stones are universally mixed with the soil, and in many places are pretty thick on the surface; though this happens chiefly on the sides of the hills, along the runs. The soil has uniformly appeared to be clayey.”

From the mouth of the east branch of the Susquehanna, through its whole length, there are ranges of hills on both sides, with a rich meadow between them and the banks of the river. At many places, upland of

various width interposes between the meadows and the foot of the hills. These meadows or flats are of different depths, sometimes two or three miles. Occasionally, the hills come down near to the river, within an eighth of a mile. The meadows, often overflowed by the spring freshets, and receiving their deposits, are very fertile. One of them, just below Wilkesbarre, is thus described :

“Leaving Harvey’s, we entered on the Shawnee plains, the most beautiful tract of land my eyes ever beheld ! The soil appeared to be inexhaustibly fertile, and, though under very slovenly husbandry, the crops were luxuriant, and the Indian-corn and grass of the richest green. Mr. Wallis said they contained about one thousand acres. I should have supposed them much more extensive.” [In a marginal note is the following: “Subsequent inquiries induce me to think these plains contain near two thousand acres.”]

“Passing over some commons and rising grounds, we then came to another extensive plain, similar to the former, but, on the whole, less beautiful. Neat and industrious husbandmen would make the whole a garden.”

It seems by this journal that, in the outer settlements of Pennsylvania, at that time, and even where the rudiments of what are now large and handsome cities and towns had begun to form, most of the dwellings were built of logs. In the old town of Reading, many of the houses were of this description. Beyond that, there was, here and there, a framed house, and a very few of stone or brick. In Hamburg, there were thirty houses, all of logs. At Sunbury, there were about one hundred. One large and well-built house was of stone. With two or three exceptions, all the rest were of logs. There was a wide range in the character of these log-houses. Some were large, commodious, neat, tight, comfortable

in all seasons, and in all respects desirable. Colonel Pickering describes this better sort as "hewed and neatly put together with double dovetails at the corners, the joints between the logs filled with small stones, and pointed with lime and mortar." Below these, there was every grade, down to what were mere huts or hovels.

Throughout the Wyoming region, the vestiges of the ruin with which it had been so often visited, as described in the preceding chapter, were everywhere seen. The exhausting conflicts between Connecticut and Pennsylvania claimants; the repeated expulsion of the whole population at short intervals; the loss of such large portions of heads of families and able-bodied men at the massacre of 1778, and in the ranks of the army of the Revolution; the Indian torches that burned the dwellings to the ground; and the floods that swept every thing away, in what was ever after spoken of as "the great *fresh* of 1784,"—left the stamp of devastation and poverty upon the entire Valley, and which long years were required to efface. The log-hovels in which many of the inhabitants dwelt were "wretched beyond description. In a great part of them there is no chimney; but a hole is left in the roof, through which the smoke escapes."

The following account of the scene of the interesting and remarkable portion of Colonel Pickering's life, upon which we are now to enter, is extracted from his journal:—

"We crossed these latter plains, and came to Wyoming, on the eastern side of the river. Wyoming town is now called Wilkesbarre; and the phrase, *Wyoming people*, comprehends all the settlers from Nescopeck Creek to Tioga; for through

that whole extent of country (being upwards of a hundred and ten miles), on both sides of the river, they have taken possession.

“Wilkesbarre was a pitch-pine plain, though pretty fertile ; but by no means comparable with the flats before described. Its surface is considerably higher than that of the flats, and, being of a drier, firmer soil, is a more suitable plat for a town. Much of it, however, was overflowed in the *great fresh* of the spring of 1784. This town was originally divided into town lots, meadow lots, and back lots. The first containing three acres, the second thirty-five, and the last two hundred and fifty acres. Then each settler drew for his lot in each division. By this manner of dividing the lands, great inconvenience arises to the farmer. His dwelling-house is on the pitch-pine plain. His meadow, a mile or more from it, on one side, and his back-lot, perhaps still farther removed, on the other side of his dwelling.

“Both at Wyoming and at Kingston, on the other side of the river, over against it, the upland rises gradually to the mountains, which are distant two and three miles from the Susquehanna ; where, as at Plymouth (which comprehends the Shawnee flats), the mountainous lands run down close upon the flats, which puts the inhabitants to great difficulty in pitching their houses ; for the flats are too low to build on, and the side of the mountain too steep and rocky.

“The flats, on one side or the other of the Susquehanna, and frequently on both sides, continue of considerable breadth, for about twenty miles from their beginning, above Nanticoke Falls. The whole are occupied by the Connecticut people and their adherents.”

The two most important personages in the Wyoming Valley at this time were John Franklin and Zebulon Butler. They were both Connecticut settlers, and had each been prominently engaged in the conflicts that had convulsed that territory. The former had distinguished himself by acts of great gallantry on several occasions.

The latter led the Connecticut forces that finally reconquered the country. Colonel Pickering was well acquainted with Butler, who, it will be remembered, was in command at Wyoming on the fatal 3d of July, when the British and Indians fell upon it, and escaped from the field of carnage after the day was lost with only about a dozen of his men. The correspondence between him and Colonel Pickering at the time has been related in the preceding chapter. It does not appear that Pickering, before this visit to Wyoming, had ever seen Franklin. They were brought afterwards into collisions of the most critical kind. Franklin became the leader of the insurgent Connecticut settlers. Butler discountenanced and opposed them. All the circumstances connected with the course of these two men, before and afterwards, give interest to the following passage from Colonel Pickering's Journal, under date of August 20th, while he was at Wyoming:—

“Colonel Zebulon Butler and Colonel Franklin spent the evening with us very sociably. Mr. Franklin appears to be the leader of the warm supporters of the claim of the Susquehanna Company against Pennsylvania. Nothing was said on that subject. In the morning, having called to see Colonel Butler, he invited me to take breakfast; during which time I made some inquiries relative to the dispute, and the proceedings of the meeting of the settlers the day before. At this meeting were present such settlers as chose to attend from Tioga downwards (yet, I have since learned that the whole number present amounted to but sixty). I found that Colonel Butler had prudently resolved to accept no office whatever among these people, except that of moderator of their meetings, when they should choose him. He was moderator of the meeting yesterday. Their principal business was to consider and determine for what extent of country they should

make their claim to the Assembly of Pennsylvania. They concluded to ask for the whole *Indian Purchase*, beginning ten miles east of the north-east branch of the Susquehanna (as it runs), and extending westward two degrees of longitude. Its breadth, north and south, I did not ascertain; but suppose it corresponds with the breadth of the State of Connecticut. In the deed of purchase (as Colonel Butler said), two degrees of longitude, *or one hundred and twenty miles*, on the erroneous idea that, in this latitude, a degree of longitude was the same as at the equator.

“Messrs. Franklin and Jenkins are chosen agents to present their claim (or petition) to the Assembly; and a messenger is gone to the President and Council to ask a passport for them. It would seem that they make this large claim, not with a confidence of its being acceded to, but from an expectation of obtaining *more* than if they asked but *little*. Such of the *old settlers* as I have conversed with, would be satisfied, if quieted in their possessions, prior to the decision of the Continental Court at Trenton. These possessions mean the lots of one hundred and fifty to three hundred acres, on which they had seated themselves and made some improvements before that day. These settlers, and the heirs of such of them as have died, are supposed to amount to about two hundred and fifty families. The *new-comers* may amount to as many more; and these, having obtained grants of *half-shares* (whence they are called *half-shares men*) from the Susquehanna Company, on condition of their residing in the settlement and defending the land, contend warmly for the whole Indian purchase. Some of the old settlers also, *being partners in the company*, still persist in this extensive claim.”

The time occupied in this tour was forty-eight days, and the distance traversed not far from six hundred miles. An opportunity had been given to form a correct idea of the country, of its condition, and of the state of mind among the people. The explorations and inquiries had been very minute and complete.

The result was entirely satisfactory to Colonel Pickering, and he returned to Philadelphia wholly resolved to settle at Wyoming, and attempt to bring all the dissensions there to a close. He forthwith signified to friends, who solicited him to that effect, that he was ready to engage in the enterprise, wrote to his family connections in Massachusetts that "the die was cast," and commenced preparations for removal. The county of Luzerne was established by the Pennsylvania legislature, and the necessary steps were taken to confer upon him its principal offices.

The account so far given has been gathered from papers written at the time.

It may be well at this point to present an extract of some length, illustrating more particularly this passage of his history, from a document already referred to. At the request of his family, and to gratify some personal friends, he prepared an account of his experiences at Wyoming, as recollected after the lapse of a long period of years. There may be some minute points as to dates, the exact sequence of events, and the views expressed of persons and things, which may admit of correction. The local antiquaries of that interesting region will supply details that will make the picture more exact than it appeared to contemporaries, and straighten out what, in the confusion of the times, may have been somewhat distorted. But the recollections of an honest and exact mind are free from the mists which vague tradition gathers over the past. The statements of such a witness and actor in the scenes described, as Colonel Pickering, are clothed with the highest authority, and will be duly estimated, in combination with all other evidence, by

historians who may undertake to treat the subject. Of one thing all may be sure, that the transactions, as they rested in the mind of Colonel Pickering, are given by him with perfect and absolute truthfulness. His memory was very precise, and retained, with great clearness, the details of his observation and experience, all along the track of his eventful and protracted career. The document will be cited, as the events are narrated, and in connection with private letters and other papers written at the time, which, to a remarkable degree show the accuracy of his memory. It was addressed to his son Henry; dated December 31st, 1818; and printed in 1819. The title-page is as follows: —

“[Not published.] A Letter from Colonel Pickering, containing a Narrative of the Outrage committed on him at Wyoming; with an Account of the Controversies respecting the Lands claimed by the States of Pennsylvania and Connecticut, which led to that Event.”

After a general historical statement of occurrences growing out of the conflict of jurisdiction between the two States, and a discussion of the pretensions of them respectively, with some criticisms upon the conduct of various parties involved in the dispute, bringing it down to the period of his action relating to it, he proceeds thus: —

“Such was the state of things, when I was requested by several of my respectable friends in Philadelphia, where I then resided, to accept of a mission from the legislature, to attempt a reconciliation and submission of the Connecticut settlers to the government of Pennsylvania. It was the autumn of 1786. In September, I had passed through their settlements, on my way with a surveyor and two other gentlemen, to view that body of lands in and about the great bend of the Susquehanna, in which I was interested, and to which I had

then thought of removing, not having business in Philadelphia to maintain my family. I saw the Starueca tract, and there I had contemplated pitching my tent: the same tract on which your brother Timothy settled, in 1801.

“Having received some information of the mischievous dispute relative to the Wyoming lands, I embraced every opportunity, while passing among the settlers, to learn their feelings, and ascertain the footing on which their peaceable submission to Pennsylvania might be effected.

“On my return home to Philadelphia, Mr. Wilson, then a distinguished lawyer at the Philadelphia bar, and afterwards a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, called to see me; and he diligently inquired concerning the temper and desires of the Connecticut settlers. I informed him that they were entirely satisfied with the Constitution of Pennsylvania, and were ready to submit to its government, provided *they could be quieted in the possession of their farms*. They had settled them, they said, in the fullest confidence that they were covered by the charter of Connecticut; they had made very valuable improvements, built houses and barns, and raised good stocks of cattle, and abundance of the necessaries of life, — when the whole were laid waste and destroyed by the common enemy, in 1778 — and, more than all these things, a great number of their brethren had perished in battle: that from these calamities they had not recovered; they were poor, and incapable of removing and seeking new settlements.

“The next news I heard on this subject was from my friend Dr. Rush. He told me that the General Assembly, then sitting in Philadelphia, had just passed a law erecting the Wyoming settlement, and a large extent of country above and below it, into a new county, by the name of Luzerne; that the usual county offices would be created, all of which would be conferred on me, if I would accept them. That being a New England man, the Connecticut settlers would place a confidence in my information and advice, which they would be inclined to withhold from a Pennsylvanian; and thus I might be the happy instrument of putting an end to an inveterate and disastrous controversy.

“Mr. Wilson also encouraged and advised me to take the step proposed by Doctor Rush. And, after taking time for consideration, I informed Mr. Wilson that I would engage in this business, *provided I might assure the Connecticut settlers that the legislature would quiet them in their possessions.* I particularly asked his opinion as a lawyer, as I also did that of Miers Fisher, a distinguished lawyer of the Society of Quakers, ‘whether an act of the legislature would be competent for that purpose, against the claims of Pennsylvanians, under titles to the same lands, derived from the proprietaries; or, rather, *whether the power of the legislature was competent to enact such a law.*’ Both the gentlemen answered in the affirmative, to accomplish a very great public good.

“With this understanding, I received from the executive appointments to various county offices; and an act of the legislature authorized me to hold elections of such officers for the county as were in the choice of the people; and, in a word, to organize the county.

“The first object was, to reconcile the Connecticut settlers to the government of Pennsylvania. For this purpose I went to Wyoming in January, 1787; called meetings of them in their villages; announced the erection of the new county, by which, in all suits at law, justice would meet them at their own doors; and, in jury trials, they would be safe in the hands of their peers, their neighbors, instead of being dragged a great distance from their homes and tried by Pennsylvanians, adherents of Penn, whom they deemed hostile to their equitable rights. I spent a month among them, and with great difficulty succeeded, on the ground of their being quieted in their possessions; assuring them that I had strong reasons to express the opinion that the legislature would pass a law for that purpose. But just as I was closing prosperously, as I thought, my month’s labor, a pretty shrewd man, John Jenkins, a major of their militia, the second* leader in the

* “The first, a man, able, bold, and energetic, was John Franklin, a native of Connecticut, and who, at this time, was in Connecticut, consulting with the Susquehanna Company (or its active members) on the means of defeating the pacific measures of Pennsylvania here mentioned. Such are my impressions of

country, in the interests of the Susquehanna Company, rose and said, they had too often experienced the bad faith of Pennsylvania to place confidence in any new measure of its legislature; *and that if they should enact a quieting law, they would repeal it, as soon as the Connecticut settlers submitted, and were completely saddled with the laws of the State.* This was prophetic; but I had then no faith in the prophecy. A new argument then occurred to me, and it was my last. I remarked, that, whatever might have been the conduct of Pennsylvania in times past, I was perfectly satisfied that *now* she was amicably disposed, and sincerely desirous of a fair accommodation; and that, if its legislature should once pass a law to quiet them in their possessions, it would never be repealed. And to give them the strongest evidence in my power that my confidence was not misplaced, I observed that all the offices conferred upon me were of small value because of the scanty population of the county; that I should need some other resource to maintain my family, such as the products of a farm; that I would therefore purchase of any of them, who had land to sell, what would be sufficient for a farm; that, in doing this, I would purchase the Connecticut title only, and thus place myself precisely on a footing with them; and that if, as I confidently expected, a quieting law passed, I should hold the land; if not, I should lose it. A number of the persons present (and it was a public meeting) immediately declared they could ask no more.

"I then recommended to them to petition the legislature, which was in session at Philadelphia, to enact a law to quiet them in their possessions. They requested me to write a petition for them. I did so. The great body of the settlers signed it. I carried it to Philadelphia, and presented it to the legislature. It was referred to a committee, who promptly made a report favorable to the petitioners; and the committee

the fact, from what I then heard; and the actual state of things, joined with the events of 1787 and 1788, warrants the conclusion.

"The father of this Major Jenkins had been a leading man, and one of the Judges of the County Court, when Connecticut exercised a jurisdiction over them. He had died before I ever saw that country."

were directed to bring in a bill accordingly. The committee put their report into my hands, and requested me to draw the bill. I made a draught, which was necessarily long, to provide for the various matters incident to the quieting and confirming of the Connecticut claims. The principal difficulty arose out of the claims of a considerable number of persons who had received grants of the best parts of the same tracts of which the Connecticut settlers were possessed,—grants made prior to the Revolution, under the authority of the Penn proprietaries, to whom belonged all the vacant land in the State, as heirs of William Penn, the original patentee of the whole province. If the lands purchased of the proprietaries were to be taken from the purchasers, to quiet the Connecticut settlers, justice required that those purchasers should receive an equivalent. If at that time the State of Pennsylvania had been possessed of adequate funds, those purchasers might have been indemnified out of the public treasury: but the State had no money, and the State certificates, like those of the United States, were then worth only four or five shillings in the pound. It was in the power of the State, however, to give a complete indemnity without increasing its financial burthens. There were some millions of acres of new, unappropriated lands, of which the Indian title had three years before been extinguished. These were at the disposal of the State. I therefore introduced into the bill a section to provide for an equitable appraisement of the tracts claimed by the Pennsylvanians in the Wyoming territory, and, in lieu thereof, authorizing them to locate, where they pleased, in the great body of vacant lands, such quantities as would be equivalent to those lost at Wyoming; not acre for acre, but value for value.

“The bill, with very small alterations, was enacted into a law. Commissioners, of whom I was one, were appointed to examine the claims on both sides: those of the Connecticut settlers to ascertain who were entitled to hold by the terms of the quieting and confirming law; those of the Pennsylvanians to ascertain the quantity and appraise the value of each tract.

“Here it is necessary to mention the rule of discrimination

prescribed by the confirming law, in regard to the Connecticut settlers.

“The decision of the federal court, at Trenton, on the controversy between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, was made on the 30th of December, 1782, in the words following:—

“‘This cause has been well argued by the learned counsel on both sides. The court are now to pronounce their sentence or judgment.

“‘We are unanimously of opinion, that the State of Connecticut has no right to the lands in controversy.

“‘We are also unanimously of opinion, that the jurisdiction and pre-emption of all the territory lying within the charter boundary of Pennsylvania, and now claimed by the State of Connecticut, do of right belong to the State of Pennsylvania.’

“This decision, pursuant to the Articles of the Confederation of the States, was final. But although the *state-claim* of Connecticut was thus for ever barred, the case of the innocent settlers, under that claim, was entitled to commiseration; and I early understood that the judges of the court recommended it to the government of Pennsylvania, to make some equitable provision for their relief,—a recommendation to which that government paid no regard. In drawing the bill for the confirming law, I marked the line between the settlers *prior* to the decree of Trenton, and *subsequent* settlers: the former entered in full faith of the right of Connecticut; the latter entered with their eyes open,—with the knowledge that the competent court had decided that Connecticut had no right: the former only were to be quieted in their possessions.

“The Susquehanna Company, claiming solely under the State of Connecticut, ought, like the State, to have abandoned their claim; but, defeated at law, they had recourse to intrigue, and all the arts of disingenuous and cunning men. In addition to the actual settlers at the time of the decree, they invited and encouraged emigration, from the States eastward of Pennsylvania, of all men destitute of property, who could be tempted by the gratuitous offer of lands; on the single condition that they should enter upon them *armed*, ‘to man their rights,’ in the cant phrase of those people.

These emigrants were called 'half-share men,' and were to have each half of a share in a township, which, I believe, was one hundred and sixty or two hundred acres; a whole share being three hundred and twenty or four hundred acres. By this management, the Susquehanna Company hoped to pour in such a mass of young and able-bodied men, as would appear formidable to the government of Pennsylvania; and to subdue and expel whom would require a considerable military force, to be raised and maintained at a heavy expense of treasure, and perhaps of blood; and that, to avoid the evils of such internal war, Pennsylvania might be induced to a compromise; not merely to quiet the actual settlers prior to the decree of Trenton, and the half-share men also, but to permit the company to take, if not their whole pretended Indian purchase, — one hundred and twenty miles in length, and in breadth about a degree of latitude, — yet so much as would make all the members rich. Such a project, to be accomplished by such desperate and flagitious means, it might be expected would meet no countenance from, much less be the very offspring, of men of whom some were of respectable standing in Connecticut; yet such was the fact, and such men, with their associates, were the authors of the outrages committed upon me, while I resided at Wyoming."

The foregoing extracts from Colonel Pickering's correspondence, "Journal and Letter," written in 1818, cover the first period into which his Wyoming experience may be divided, — including his visit to the territory in August and September, 1786, preliminary to his deciding whether to settle there, to his return to Philadelphia; and also his second visit, in which he spent the months of January and February, 1787, making arrangements, on the spot, to provide for a permanent residence in his new home, and to adjust the questions that had so long agitated and distressed the population of that region. It is apparent that he was sanguine in the be-

lief that he had made favorable progress in securing the public ends the government of Pennsylvania had in view in creating the new county and placing its administration in his hands.

Some letters he wrote, at or near the time, are presented, at this point, in whole or in part. The matter of them, to a considerable degree, belongs to the sphere of common every-day life, and to business or domestic details, regarded by many, perhaps, as not of sufficient general interest or importance to be embodied in history. The design of this biography, however, is to present its subject, not exclusively in his public career, but in his private walk, describing his character and course of action in the ordinary scenes and duties of the household and homestead. He considered them the most interesting scenes, and the most honorable duties, of human life and experience. The head of a family was, in his estimation, a higher position than senates, cabinets, or armies can offer; and to its minutest obligations he was ever faithful, however far distant, or however elevated the official posts he occupied.

The following letters show the steps he took in purchasing a house lot, and relate the cares and labors incident to the removal of his family through a wilderness, and preparing for it a habitation with the requisite provisions and available comforts. Agricultural materials and implements, household utensils, manufacturing tools, and miscellaneous articles of all sorts, have to be thought of, besides necessary food and clothing. It may, upon the whole, prove not unacceptable to the readers of these pages to catch an insight of a form of life, of which modern experience, as a general thing,

affords no information. The difficulties encountered, and the hardships endured, in opening a residence, and maintaining a family, when it could only be reached by slow and toilsome labors of the oar, against the current of rivers, by a round-about course, and by traversing pathless woods, are not known to the remotest or the humblest settlers in our day, who are carried, with their families, goods, and furniture, upon railroads, whose level tracks stretch over valleys, cut through mountains, penetrate the central wildernesses, and span the continent; or up rivers, in light-draught steamboats, with speed unimpeded by winds or currents, and threading interior streams almost to their sources.

Colonel Pickering, it will be seen, at once set his energies at work in an attempt to open a shorter and easier route between Wyoming and Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, March 20th, 1787.

"MR. JEDIDIAH HIDE,

"SIR,

"When I was at Wyoming, in February last, I purchased of Captain Spalding half of the meadow lot, of a back lot, and of a five-acre lot, which were the late Colonel Durkee's. He told me that the other half of those lots belonged to you, and that you was desirous of selling it, and for this purpose desired him to advise you when he sold, that the whole might go together. I intended to make you an offer of the same price I gave him; this was sixty-five pounds, Pennsylvania currency, or 173½ dollars, payable one half on the 15th September next, and the other half on the first of May, 1788. However, if different periods of payment would suit you better, we should not differ on that account. There appears to be a prospect of peace to that unhappy country, and if the laws of Pennsylvania are submitted to, I shall go there to live, to execute some civil offices to which I am appointed.

"You, perhaps, might have been willing to take less than I

agreed to give Captain Spalding; but I supposed you would like to know what that was, and therefore I have candidly told you; as well as of the prospect of the Wyoming quarrel, without which settlement, indeed, the lands there would be of little value.

"I am a stranger to you, and therefore request you to apply to Mr. Aaron Cleveland, whom I have requested to treat with you on the subject. Or, if you have a friend in this city, you can authorize him to act for you in this matter.

"I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING."

"PHILADELPHIA, March 20th, 1787.

"MR. AARON CLEVELAND,

"Having been appointed to some public offices in the county of Luzerne in this State (which county comprehends the Wyoming lands), I was authorized by the General Assembly, in conjunction with Colonel Butler and Mr. Franklin, to hold an election there. Franklin was absent, but Colonel Butler joined me, and with much labor and difficulty we persuaded the people to elect a Councillor, Representative, &c. The Councillor, Colonel Denison, has taken his seat in Council, but Mr. Franklin has stayed at home, dissatisfied (as I am well informed) at there having been an election; and he may probably continue his opposition to the measures pursuing by government for giving peace to that unhappy country. However, I am disposed to believe that peace is not far distant; for I think those measures will give general satisfaction. I shall in consequence move up to that country with my family. When there, last winter, I was informed that you owned a town lot in Wilkesbarre, and that you would probably be willing to sell it; if so, and you will inform me of the terms, or authorize any friend of yours here to sell it, and we agree as to the price, I will purchase it. I observed a clump of young apple-trees on the plain, which, it was said, were in your lot. As they are exposed to the cattle, and may not probably be wanted for the lot on which they stand, I shall be greatly obliged if you will give me leave to remove them: what they are worth I shall be willing to pay.

"You may perhaps recollect me. I think I saw you at Salem (Massachusetts), where I then lived. I believe it was at your relation's, Mrs. Higginson. On the ground of that connection, I will ask your friendship to assist me in bargaining for one half the right, in Wilkesbarre, which belonged to Colonel Durkee, and which was sold by his son John to Captain Spalding and (as I am informed) Mr. Jedidiah Hide, of Norwich. When at Wyoming I bought Spalding's half (viz. half the meadow lot, half a five-acre lot, and half the back lot), for sixty-five pounds Pennsylvania currency. Captain Spalding told me that Mr. Hide desired him to let him know when he sold, because the whole lot together, he supposed, would sell better than in halves. When I purchased of Spalding, it was in expectation that I could purchase Mr. Hide's half. I now beg the favor of you to see Mr. Hide, and, in my behalf, to treat with him for his interest afore-mentioned. I shall write to Mr. Hide (but I am not certain whether I am right in his Christian name), and as I am a stranger to him, beg leave to refer him to you for further information. I am to pay Captain Spalding one half his money the 15th September next, and the other half on the 1st of May, 1788. If Mr. Hide does not apply to you, I beg you will see him as soon as you can with convenience. Please to direct to me at Philadelphia. If I should be gone, Mr. Samuel Hodgdon, my friend, will act on my behalf. I expect shortly to go to Wyoming, to bring forward an election of justices of the peace.

"I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING."

"PHILADELPHIA, March 27th, 1787.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I have so far accomplished a business of great moment, as to bring the Wyoming people to consent to receive the laws of Pennsylvania, provided their old possessions could be confirmed to them, and this day the General Assembly have agreed to a law for quieting them, on the principles I held out to the people; so peace and good government will be introduced into a settlement with which Pennsylvania has been

contending these seventeen or eighteen years. The result of the measure will oblige me to go to Wyoming (now called the County of Luzerne) in a few days, with the law confirming their titles, acquired prior to the decree of the federal court at Trenton, in December, 1782, by which the claim of Connecticut to the lands in question (and other lands within the charter bounds of Pennsylvania) was rejected. I thus consider myself as fixed for the remainder of my life in this State, and here I should wish to concentrate my interest.

“I would sell not only my lot in Brown’s (or Fitch’s) farm, but the residue of my lands, provided it should be agreeable to you to take them, and this the happy recovery of your health I hope will enable you to do. I am the more induced to make this proposal now, because I have bargained for several parcels of land at Wyoming, containing in the whole about seven hundred acres, for which I shall have to pay about five hundred dollars, in the course of five months, and nearly five hundred more in a year. This will make it convenient to me to receive part of the money, for my lands in Salem, as early as may be; for some of my first payments will be due by the last of June next. For this reason I should wish the lot in Fitch’s farm were sold to him immediately, and the money sent to me (or, in my absence, to my partner, Mr. Samuel Hodgdon), at Philadelphia. I owe sister Gool, by a note for the house furniture I purchased of her. If it should be agreeable to you to take my lands, then I should desire you to assume the debt to sister Gool, at the amount of the principal and interest at the time you assume it. I request your answer on this subject as early as may be.

“Some of my law books will be useful to me. Such as you do not want yourself I should be glad to have shipped to me by the first vessel from Salem. Such as I shall not wish to retain I can readily sell here. Blackstone and Burn, in particular, will be useful to you; and I shall not want them, as I have a late edition of Blackstone, and intend to get the latest of Burn. Coke’s ‘Institutes,’ three volumes, and Bacon’s ‘Abridgment,’ five volumes, I should wish to receive, if you have not sold them.

"I am a little at a loss what to say about my son John. I wish to have him with me, and his mother is very desirous of his coming home. However, I will let the matter rest until I return from Wyoming, which will be the beginning of May.

"Present my love to all under your roof, and believe me, dear brother, most affectionately yours,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"JOHN PICKERING."

Middletown, on the wagon road from Philadelphia, was, as has been stated, not far below Harrisburg, on the eastern bank of the Susquehanna. The person to whom the following letters were addressed resided there.

"PHILADELPHIA, March 9th, 1787.

"MR. ABNER WICKERSHAM.

"SIR,

"Enclosed is the receipt of James Hay, for nine barrels of salt and one barrel of barley, put into his wagon, and which he is to deliver to you. The whole are to go to Wyoming. As I am a stranger to you, I have requested your brother Amos to write to you, and his letter is enclosed. I have now to beg you will receive the above articles of the wagoner, and pay him the balance due for the transportation, as I did not choose to pay him the whole until the goods should be delivered. The balance due him is five pounds ten shillings, which I request you to pay him in *cash*, and I will repay the same sum to your order on demand, with your usual charges.

"If a good conveyance presents to Wyoming, you will oblige me greatly by forwarding the whole or a part of the barrels to that place; but if only a part should be sent, then I wish the barrel of barley to go first. Next week I shall set out for Wyoming, by the way of the Wind-gap; and if, on my arrival, none of the barrels should have arrived, I shall send down to you for them, as early as I possibly can. Should

you forward the goods, please to address them to me, or, in my absence, to Mr. John Hollenback at Wilkesbarre. In the course of the spring and summer I shall have several loads to send to Wyoming, and wish to know whether it will be agreeable to you to take charge of them. Should I be absent when your order arrives at Philadelphia, be pleased to direct an application to Samuel Hodgdon, Esq., at my house, who will pay it.

“ I am, Sir, &c.,

“ T. PICKERING.”

“ PHILADELPHIA, April 2d, 1787.

“ MR. ABNER WICKERSHAM.

“ SIR,

“ I wrote to you on the 29th ult., and enclosed a letter of credit from your brother in town, that you might pay such sums, to the wagoners whom I should employ to transport some goods to Middletown, as I should desire. In that letter I requested to be informed whether it would be agreeable to you to take charge of some other goods, which I might forward in the course of the spring and summer; but conveyances presenting, I have embraced them without waiting for your answer. This I hope you will excuse, as I am solicitous to have the salt forwarded without delay. I have therefore to request you to pay to Peter Barsg the sum of £3 14s. 8d. in specie, and to Michael Spidel £3 13s. 11d., in specie; and those sums shall be paid your order at sight. If I am absent, my partner, Samuel Hodgdon, Esq., will pay your drafts. I have further to request that if Mr. Hodgdon should forward some more salt, or other articles, on my account, that you would have the goodness to receive them, and pay the sums he requests for their transportation, which will in like manner be repaid to your order.

“ Indorsed is an invoice of the two loads now forwarded and the receipt of the wagoners therefor, on the safe delivery of which you will be pleased to pay them the forementioned sums. Among the loading is a keg (iron-hooped), marked T. P., No. 24, containing clover seed, which I shall

be anxious to get up to Wyoming as soon as possible, though I should not wish you to forward it unless you meet a very safe conveyance. •

“ I am, &c.,

“ T. PICKERING.

“ P. S. With my own goods I have sent one case of gin, one barrel of salt, and a small keg of sugar, for Colonel Nathan Denison. They are all marked N. D., which he requests you to forward by the first good boat to Wyoming, addressed to Captain John Paul Schott.”

“ PHILADELPHIA, April 5th, 1787.

“ GENERAL MUHLENBURGH.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ The Assembly having granted £150 for the purpose of opening a road from the mouth of Nescopeck Creek to the Lehigh (a distance of about three and twenty miles), two persons will undertake to perform the work, if that sum can be forthwith appropriated to that use. They proposed getting an additional sum by subscription, to be called for if the public grant proved inadequate. But this seemed a beginning at the wrong end. And, after a full consideration of the matter, I proposed the following mode of procedure : —

“ That application should be made to Council to appoint Evan Owen Commissioner to explore, survey, and mark the best route for the road, and that Jacob Weiss should contract to open it, so as to render it fit for the passing of wagons carrying a ton weight.

“ This proposal I made on this principle : that persons deeply interested in having the shortest and best road cut, would be the fittest to be employed to execute the work.

“ Mr. Owen is an intelligent man, and I find, on inquiry, deserving public trust. He owns a tract of land opposite the mouth of Nescopeck, which he has laid out into lots for a town, and has no *intermediate* interest. He therefore will seek the shortest and best route, and is so solicitous to have the work done that he has consented to undertake the trust ; and, as the public grant will probably be insufficient for open-

ing a good road, he will perform the duty of commissioner and surveyor *gratis*; the public only, out of the £150 granted, furnishing provisions and paying the hands necessary to be employed as chain-carriers and markers; this service of his to come in the place of the sum he would otherwise subscribe to the work.

“Mr. Weiss has an interest near the hither end of the proposed road, and is equally anxious to have it opened. He will contract to do it for the remainder of the £150, trusting to obtain by subscription what shall be requisite to complete the road, if that remainder should be insufficient.

“Mr. Owen will explore and survey the road, and return a plan of it to Council, by the last of this month; and, if the Council approve of it, Mr. Weiss will open it without delay, and he thinks he can complete it by midsummer, provided he can begin to work early in May, and is furnished with a part of the money to lay in provisions, &c.

“I confess that I cannot conceive of a more eligible mode of executing this business, and I hope it may be agreeable to the Council. It is an object of great importance. At present the only way in which any necessary goods can be transported to the county of Luzerne, is by land from Philadelphia to Middletown, ninety-eight miles, or to Harrisburg, upwards of a hundred miles, and then by boats up the Susquehanna, about one hundred and twenty miles, to Wyoming. This circuitous route is so expensive as to forbid the attempt to bring any produce from Wyoming to this city. The want of a wagon road to Wyoming will impede the settlement of the county of Luzerne, and of the northern part of the county of Northumberland; for families cannot go thither unless they can travel on foot or on horseback, or will venture to undertake the tedious passage, before mentioned, from Middletown or Harrisburg by water. The passage by water from the mouth of Nescopeck to Wyoming, being only about thirty miles, would easily be accomplished.

“I trust this matter will appear to you deserving of the immediate consideration of Council, and that the necessity of the measure and the ease and certainty with which, in the way above proposed, it may be executed, will be motives

sufficient to induce Council to adopt it, if it be *possible* to furnish the *money*.

“I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

These letters afford a specimen of Colonel Pickering's style, as a business man, in conducting transactions and dealing with other men. He was careful, considerate, and candid, showing his hand openly, giving attention to the minutest details, and communicating his views distinctly and fully. They also shed light upon the general state of things at that time, particularly upon the experiences of life in a new frontier settlement.

It is quite evident that this interval of time, while he was in Philadelphia, including the greater part of March and the first week of April, 1787, was crowded with business and cares that would have been exhausting to most persons. But his active and powerful nature seems to have been insensible to fatigue, either bodily or mental. Watchful attendance upon the proceedings of the Council and Assembly of the State, in looking out for the interests of his county, and urging such measures as he judged essential to give it peace and promote its welfare; bargaining for lands, as the scene of future agricultural labors, and a new homestead; collecting the innumerable articles necessary in building and furnishing a house; preparations for the removal of his family into it; providing whatever mechanics would need, and implements for house accommodation or farm work, loading several large wagons; arrangements for breaking up his family in Philadelphia, selecting what could be transported by a long, rough route over mountains and rivers, and through woods, and would be desirable

and suitable in its new abode, — forwarding what of the residue was of special domestic and family interest to his relatives in Massachusetts, and setting apart what it was best to dispose of in Philadelphia; the final winding up of business connected with his commercial enterprises and operations; conducting a correspondence with his brother in Salem, to raise the means to meet the expenses of the crisis by selling his patrimonial lands in that place; all the while, as for years afterwards, answering letters addressed to him by the War Department and by individuals, seeking such information and advice as his recollection, papers, and experience as Quartermaster-General of the Revolutionary army would enable him to give, — an inspection of his manuscripts shows, indeed, an amount and variety of claims upon his time and thoughts that cannot be measured.

He returned to Wyoming shortly after the date of his letter to General Muhlenberg, but was not able to take his family with him, as the preparations to receive them were not sufficiently advanced. He instantly resumed his public duties, as appears by the following letter to his wife: —

“WILKESBARRE, April 28th, 1787.

“I am happy that I can inform you that we have held an election here in perfect tranquillity, and that I have reason to think all danger at an end. Franklin has got to the end of his tether; and I believe it will not be in his power to do more mischief.

“I expect to leave this for home this day week (say May 5th), when I hope to find you and Betsey and the boys in perfect health.

“I am busy in making a garden, and in farming; but we have such cold and dry weather that nothing grows, — hardly a night without frost.

"Mr. Hollenback will deliver this; and I wish him to breakfast or dine with you; for he has been very obliging to me; and I expect we shall live in his house, which is a very good one. His brother does not quit the log-hut I told you of. Mr. Hollenback can give you an account of the election.

"I am, my dear, wholly yours,

"T. PICKERING."

He made a hurried visit to Philadelphia, probably starting at the time stated in this letter. One purpose in making it was to provide supplies necessary to the commencement of housekeeping at Wyoming, and articles requisite in building. The following was written on the eve of his return. Mr. Fry was a business man at Middletown.

"PHILADELPHIA, May 23d, 1787.

"MR. GEORGE FRY.

"SIR,

"The bearer, Michael Tyce, will deliver you a load of goods belonging to me, of which I beg your care to receive and store them until Mr. Matthew Hollenback or I shall send for them. The load consists of the following articles, viz. :—

1 hhd. molasses, 104 gallons.
1 barrel of Muscovado sugar.
1 barrel of vinegar.
2 kegs of nails.
1 tierce of bacon.

1 pine chest of sundries.
1 box of candles.
1 box of soap.
1 ditto chocolate.

"I have paid the driver, Mr. Tyce, for the transportation hence to Middletown.

"P. S. I believe all the casks and boxes are marked 'T. Pickering.'"

He must have made the journey this time in about five days, as appears from the date of the following letter to his wife :—

"WILKESBARRE, May 29th, 1787.

"I have the pleasure to inform you that we, this day, opened the Courts of Common Pleas and Sessions of the

Peace for the County of Luzerne, when every thing was conducted in perfect quiet and good order. Mr. Ellicott, of Baltimore (the Commissioner for running the boundary line between Pennsylvania and New York), happening to be here, on his way up the river, delayed his journey a few hours, that he might be present at the opening of the first courts, and, I am told, expressed much satisfaction at the event. Four gentlemen were admitted by the court to practise as attorneys in this county. These were Mr. Bowman, and Mr. William Nichols, whom you know, and two young gentlemen from Connecticut, who have been here a few months.

“One of the men, with whom I talked on my way down to Philadelphia, had undertaken the repairs of the road through the swamp, and made it passable for a wagon lightly loaded to within seven miles of Wilkesbarre; and the people here have made some slight repairs through those seven miles. The repairs, however, are not so effectual as I could wish, and I shall endeavor to do something more to the road before you come up.

“The frosts here have been severe. We observed in the woods that the leaves of some trees just opened had been killed; and last night and the night before all the beans that had come up were destroyed, mine among the rest; and, unfortunately, I forgot to put the bag of seeds among the articles to be sent up in my wagon. Some seeds I have, and shall endeavor to replant what the frosts have destroyed.

“I forgot to mention to Mr. Rea that when here in April and the beginning of this month, I gave a Mr. Erwin an order on Major Hodgdon for twenty pounds. If he should present it before my return, let Mr. Rea pay it with any moneys he may have; as I assured Mr. Erwin he should not be disappointed. It is for bringing the salt up the river.

“I shall return as soon as possible, perhaps sooner than I expected when I left home. I was diverted to-day by the congratulations of several people, who said they were glad to see me *at home* again, meaning at *Wyoming*.

“I remain, my dear, ever yours,

“T. PICKERING.”

After having completed the organization of the county, caused the necessary elections to be held, put the courts in operation, and given the requisite directions to those charged with the construction of his buildings and the laborers employed upon his grounds, he went back again to Philadelphia, in the earlier part of June, to procure further supplies, and bring his family to Wyoming. A few letters written while he was there on this occasion, with some brief accompanying remarks, will be better than a more formal narrative.

"PHILADELPHIA, June 20, 1787.

"MR. GEORGE FRY.

"SIR,

"By the two wagons of Adam Spake and Jacob Rheim, I send to your care, the articles under-mentioned, viz. :—

Two hhds. rum marked M. H. for Matthias Hollenback, Esq.

One hhd. rum marked T. P.

One hhd. bacon marked ditto.

One barrel of Muscovado sugar marked ditto.

One keg of nails.

One small keg of nails.

Six bundles containing six dozen of New England grass scythes.

Five bundles of New England red sole leather, containing 20 sides.

Eight bundles of nail rods.

All which (the two first-mentioned hogsheads of rum excepted) belong to me.

"I expect Mr. Hollenback's boat will be down from Wyoming about the time these wagons will arrive at Middletown. He will probably send orders about the loading of her. If he should not, I must request you to put on board her all the articles above enumerated, and my hogshead of molasses which you now have in store, and as many of my barrels of salt (now I suppose at the store of the late Abner Wickersham), as will make up a proper loading for the boat. The waters will probably be pretty low, and therefore it may be best to put on board her a moderate load. I enclose an order on the administrator or agent for Mr. Wickersham's estate, for the salt.

"I have left with Weidman and Neilson twelve bundles of

nail rods, which they will forward to you by the first conveyance, and if they arrive before Mr. Hollenback's boat is set off for Wyoming, be pleased to put them on board her.

"I am, &c.,

"T. PICKERING.

	£	s.	d.
Adam Spake, 17 cwt., at 5s.	4	5	0
Jacob Rheim, 24 cwt., at 5s.	6	0	0
Scythes	0	8	6
Abraham Rheim, 3 cwt. 5s.	0	15	0
	£11	8	6"

This, with letters given before, will perhaps serve to afford some estimate of the difficulties in transportation, at that time, to Wyoming. It was slow and expensive. The pay to the wagoners for conveying two loads of his furniture, a few weeks after Colonel Pickering removed his family, was £15. This was only to Middletown; the freight charges by boat, up the rivers against the stream, were to be added to the account. The wagons, on the roads of Pennsylvania penetrating the interior, were large and clumsy vehicles, capable of carrying very heavy loads, and constructed with a view to strength alone. They were usually drawn by five horses. The wheels were of a broad rim, and by their great diameter lifted the body of the wagon high above the ground. On this same road, from Philadelphia to Middletown and Harrisburg, the stage-coaches, as late as 1826, were of a similar construction, — very capacious, strong, and heavy, with broad-rimmed large wheels, raising the body of the coach to such a height that passengers entered the doors at the sides, on ladders prepared and carried for the purpose.

The constant agitations, and alternating convulsions to which the Wyoming settlements had, from the first,

been subjected, prevented the establishment of permanent institutions of worship and education. Colonel Pickering had received a strict religious training, and through life retained a profound reverence for Christianity and its ordinances. He was, in early life, a professor and communicant successively in the Tabernacle, South and First Churches in Salem. During the Revolutionary war he had no fixed home for his family. While living in Philadelphia, as a merchant, he was, undoubtedly, always an attendant on worship; but his views on some doctrinal points prevented his forming a particular connection with any church there, at that time; and his children had remained unbaptized. His mind was much exercised on the subject now that he was about to remove his family permanently where there was not then, and might not for some time be, any provision for the Christian ministry and ordinances.

The following letter is found in a first draught, among his papers : —

“SUNDAY, July 1, 1787.

“SIR,

“Having reflected on our conversation when you were last at my house, I have concluded to state the following propositions, as expressive of my belief : —

“1. That there is ‘one God,’ and Governor of the world, and ‘one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.’

“2. That the Holy Scriptures, of the Old and New Testament, were ‘given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.’

“3. That every professor of religion ought to do those things which he believes to be enjoined by the Author of it.

“Hence, baptism appearing to me to be instituted by Jesus Christ, the Author of the Christian religion, I desire my chil-

dren may be baptized, in the form of the institution: 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' as an evidence of my faith, and desire that they may bear the name of Christ, whose instructions I wish them to obey.

"For the reason above mentioned, I consider it to be the duty of every Christian to celebrate the Lord's supper, to 'show forth his death till he come;' but that all professors of Christianity, seriously desirous of obeying this commandment, should be invited to partake of it, without the deterring formalities observed in the Presbyterian churches, and with too much rigor in most others. While these formalities are retained, I will venture to say that the number of communicants will be inconsiderable. I believe no attentive observer can doubt that, in every congregation, there are many good Christians who abstain from that ordinance; but who would attend it, if those formalities were done away. But unhappily for the world, this simple institution has long been wrapped up in *mystery*, to the great detriment of the Christian religion and its professors. I hope the liberality of the present age may produce an alteration; and that every Christian, feeling *at the time* a disposition to obey this commandment of our Lord, may be invited freely to sit at the table, or rather in his own seat, to partake of the supper. Passing by other exceptionable things, I will just observe that the practice of getting a *ticket of admission* is to me a very disgusting one. Of what are the ministers of religion afraid? Is it to be presumed that any other than professing Christians will partake of the supper? What can induce a pagan, or a Jew, or any other unbeliever in Christianity, or one who is regardless of the commands of Christ, to observe *this* ordinance of the supper? They will not do it. It is usual to preach a sermon, relative to the ordinance, when administered. In that the people may be seriously addressed, and informed of the absurdity, impropriety, and uselessness of attending this institution, unless they believe in Christ, and obey his *moral* commands; that, without the latter, they will be subjects of reproof, like his to the Scribes and Pharisees, of observing this merely positive institution, while they omit the weightier matters of the law, 'judgment, mercy, and faith,'

which will lead them to 'walk humbly before God.' With such serious cautions, the invitation should doubtless be universal. 'Whosoever will, let him come.'"

"These remarks on the Lord's supper I have, Sir, thrown out for your consideration. If some such alteration as I have suggested were to be introduced, I believe the cause of Christianity would thereby be promoted. If a church should be formed where I am going, I shall feel it my duty to attempt it.

"I am, dear Sir, affectionately and respectfully yours,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"REV. DR. SPROAT."

A marginal note to the three articles of faith, at the beginning of this letter, is as follows: "If these definitions are satisfactory, I would request to have my children baptized, this afternoon at my own house, at five or six o'clock, or at any other hour more convenient to you."

Dr. Sproat administered the ordinance at the time and place designated.

The following letter fixes the date of Colonel Pickering's departure from Philadelphia to his new home at Wyoming. His eldest son, John, then in his eleventh year, was with his uncle at Salem. The party consisted of the Colonel, his wife, with their four other boys, Timothy, Henry, Charles, and William; his wife's sister, Miss Elizabeth White, generally spoken of as Betsey in these letters; and some persons in domestic service, or hired to work on the farm.

"PHILADELPHIA, July 10th, 1787.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I received your letter of April 28th, about the middle of June, on my return from Wyoming, and was sincerely rejoiced to find your health so established, and hope you will at no time be unmindful of the care necessary to preserve it.

"I am content to sell you my share in the pastures given us by our father, and my third of the lower pasture, for the thousand dollars you propose. If Mr. Fitch declines purchasing Osgood's lot, I wish you to take it at the price you mention, of three hundred dollars. I should be sorry to have my Middlefield lot separated from the farm: it is valuable in itself, and so convenient to you for hay. I would not choose, therefore, that you should sell it to a stranger; let it rest, therefore, until you find it convenient to purchase it; if any accident should render it necessary to have it otherwise sold, I will advise you of it.

"I shall draw for the six hundred dollars you have by you, before I leave town, which will be this day; in the afternoon my whole family sets out for Wyoming, and I must conclude this letter to prepare for our march. We are all in health and spirits. My wife and I are sensibly affected by your cordial professions of affection; we shall bear you in the kindest remembrance. We also desire our very affectionate love may be presented to all the family at Salem and elsewhere.

"My son, John, I must leave under your care until I get *settled* at Wyoming, and a school established. I hope he will not prove a burden to you.

"Most affectionately I bid you adieu,

"T. PICKERING.

"JOHN PICKERING, Esq."

"P. S. The list you sent of the law books was not exact. Though I have put up the memorandum, by which I could tell what arrived. I recollect, however, Lillie's 'Entries' came to hand, but is not in your list. You mention Coke's 'Institutes' as sent; but the first part only (or Coke upon Littleton), came to hand; the other parts, I suppose, are with you. What remain may be forwarded when a convenient opportunity presents.

"P. M. Since the morning I have concluded to desire you to forward only two hundred dollars, and reserve the rest for my order. Be so kind as to get Mr. Williams to send the two hundred dollars to my partner, Samuel Hodgdon, Esq., in Philadelphia. — T. PICKERING."

After a journey attended with much hardship and endurance the party reached Wyoming. The object of his labors was accomplished, and he was happy in the confidence that a home was provided for his family during the remainder of life. But in less than three months an entire reverse came over their condition. The wife, with an infant scarcely three weeks old, was suddenly left among strangers in a strange place, far in the woods, and surrounded by insurgents breathing vengeance against her husband, while he was in exile at Philadelphia. She could not go to him, and he was prevented by threats of violence from coming to her. In their preceding separation he had been in Wyoming, and she in Philadelphia. Their positions were now transposed; and the separation, for many months, was rendered absolute and complete by extraordinary occurrences to be related in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER IX.

Disturbances in Wyoming. — John Franklin's Arrest and Imprisonment. — The Pennsylvania Commissioners driven out of the Country. — Colonel Pickering's Escape into the Woods.

1787.

COLONEL PICKERING'S family were temporarily in a hired tenement, while his house was in process of erection. He at once busily employed himself in hastening it on, bringing his land into good condition, and attending to his public duties, in the administration of law, and attempts to establish peace and order. The difficulties experienced in procuring the innumerable articles required for his buildings and farm, which had to be brought from Philadelphia, in the near approach of the season when transportation would be impossible, — the roads being impassable for teams in every fall and spring, — will be best appreciated by giving some extracts from his correspondence.

His partner in business at Philadelphia, Major Hodgdon, having conceived a plan of establishing a store at Wilkesbarre, requested information as to the kind of goods with which to stock it. The following extracts from Colonel Pickering's letters in reply, give an insight into his labors and cares at that time, and shed light upon the state of things generally in an outskirt settlement.

“ WILKESBARRE, September 15th, 1787.

“ You repeat the subject of a store at this place, and desire an estimate of the cost of a proper building for the purpose. As to such a building, I should not think it expedient to erect one at present, even if there were time. I shall doubtless get my house into such forwardness that I can safely lodge liquors and most other goods in the cellar, which will be, I expect, a very dry one. All the difficulty I have to apprehend, respects the means of remittance. I think we could not expect five per cent in money. Flax seed I suppose may be got for five shillings per bushel, but this bears a high price in Philadelphia, *only in the fall*, when the transportation is impracticable. Indian-corn will probably be at two shillings and sixpence. Rye is at three shillings and sixpence, and wheat at five shillings. Oats at one shilling and tenpence halfpenny. Good swingled flax at ninepence. In the spring, wheat, corn, and rye have always fetched good prices. Last spring, wheat was at seven shillings and sixpence, corn at five shillings, rye at from five shillings and sixpence to six shillings; but the flood of last fall occasioned a scarcity. Next spring, however, if peace be firmly established here, will bring in many new settlers, who must be supplied with bread, and this will make grain in demand. We may reckon the different sorts to rise from twenty-five to fifty per cent, in their prices, especially corn and wheat.

“ Agreeably to your request, I shall enclose an invoice of the articles, which I think will be in the greatest demand, in my next, which will go by John Scott, who will set out on Tuesday the 18th instant.

“ I have given Mr. Hollenback an open letter to you, in which I request the payment of £53 2s. 6d. due to him on securities I gave last winter for the lands I purchased here. He is going to Philadelphia for his winter stock of goods, and his end will be answered, if the merchants with whom he deals accept your notes at such payments as can be agreed on.

“ I remain with much affection yours, &c.”

“WILKESBARRE, September 17th, 1787.

“I forgot again to enclose Esquire Marcy’s description of new land, about which I wrote you the 15th, by Mr. Hollenback. I will try not to forget to put it into this letter.

“I now enclose an invoice of such goods as I think would be proper for a store at this place. I am so little acquainted with the cost of most of them, that I can form no estimate of their amount; perhaps this will be much higher than you find convenient, or think expedient, to adventure; if so, you will curtail it. In the invoice are sundry articles, which I should wish to receive on my own account, but have not inserted them in my list, because you seemed determined to engage in the store, and in that way I could be supplied.

“The transportation of the whole must be by the way of Middletown, addressed to Mr. George Fry, merchant there. To him Mr. Hollenback sends his goods, and takes them thence to this place in his own boat. Before he set off I asked him whether there would be room in his boat for any goods for me. He doubted it, but said she might go down again. However, it will be immaterial; as there are boats plying from Middletown which are always glad of loading. Hollenback formerly offered to transport for me from Middletown, at £5 per ton. I suppose it cannot be got for less, excepting such a heavy article as my salt, which Robert Erwin brought up for fifteen shillings per barrel (the usual price for a barrel as heavy as a barrel of liquor), and each weighed upwards of three hundred-weight; and I suppose the land transportation from Philadelphia to Middletown may cost as much more. For the last load I sent that way I gave five shillings for a hundred-weight,—before that, four shillings and sixpence. Heretofore the boatmen have demanded *cash* for their transportation; and possibly I could pay this partly in produce; but, for whatever must be paid in cash, I must depend on you. I am so *poor*, I scarcely know how I shall procure *beef* for my family, for there is no getting it without cash. The price, at present, threepence per pound, beef, hide, and tallow. I might, however, purchase a bullock this week, and promise payment on the return of John Scott, by

whom I am under the necessity of requesting you to send me *fifty dollars*.

“Hollenback told me that he thought iron could be purchased at Middletown at £25 per ton; and, therefore, I omitted that article in the invoice. About half a ton, I think, will be enough for the winter. I intended to write to Mr. Fry on the subject, and request him to forward that quantity; but I recollect Mr. Hollenback said he should go to the furnace nearest Middletown and engage his; and this will be the most certain way of getting some for our store; and perhaps you can agree with him to procure some for us. I have some nail-rods by me, and yet have noted five hundred-weight in the invoice. My reason is, that I think I can get the whole worked up this winter into twenty-penny, tenpenny, and eight-penny nails, at a cheaper rate than at any other time; and next spring I think there will be so much building, as to make a demand for them. The tenpenny sell now at fifteen pence a pound. What I have had made I agreed to allow the smith fivepence a pound for, he engaging to return me one hundred pounds nails for one hundred and twelve pounds rods; but he returned only at the rate of ninety-six pounds. I wish you to inquire in Philadelphia what is the usual waste. A bundle of spike rods (middling size) would be convenient for many purposes. A glazier's diamond, with some instructions how to apply it, would be extremely useful to me; and with that William George could fit up many tin lanterns with small panes cut out of broken glass.

“I originally concluded to put 6 by 8 glass into the windows of my dwelling-house; but since the office windows have been glazed, I find the effect of them in a building so large as the dwelling-house would be disagreeable, and have, therefore, concluded to have 7 by 9 glass. Four hundred panes would glaze the house; and if packed as they ought to be, not two in a hundred need be broken. The two half-boxes of 6 by 8, which I bought of Bache and Shay, cost £3, which I offered to pay Colonel Shay; but, as I proposed getting more for my house, he desired the payment might rest till then. The glass is very true, but the panes (which were made of their broken panes of larger glass) not truly cut, one

parcel being considerably larger than the other, and many wanting a piece at their corners, which will require patching, to complete the panes in setting. The two hundred feet of 7 by 9, I suppose, will cost £9, unless fresh arrivals should have cheapened them. One hundred and seventy-five feet will glaze my house; but a box cannot be divided; and any surplus will sell to the inhabitants. If Bache and Shay's glass were to be well packed, in strong boxes made for the purpose, I should prefer it, because I could depend on all the panes being *whole* at Philadelphia.

"In choosing the goods of all kinds for this place, you will recollect the sort of people who are to buy. The articles should be strong and cheap, and a good proportion (especially what is for the females) have a smart appearance.

"I remain yours, &c."

"Friday, September 21st, 1787.

"DEAR SIR,

"John Scott left this last Tuesday morning for Philadelphia. David Mead, Esq., just tells me that he intends to set out for Philadelphia this day. I therefore seize a few moments to inform you that Mrs. P. is unusually well, and may in a few days come below stairs. The infant is also strong and healthy. The rest of the family are well.

"The remainder of my house-frame is arrived, and the carpenters are framing it. One of them desires me to procure him a pair of strong carpenter's compasses, which John Scott can bring up in his saddle-bags. We shall be ready to raise next week, but the lime-burner having disappointed me about lime at Nescopeck, I may postpone the raising until I can get lime-mortar to lay the underpinning of the cellar; except that, the walls being finished, and I expect the lime the week after next. In the mean time, the carpenters will be preparing the stuff for covering and finishing the house. So, upon the whole, I have no doubt of moving into it this fall, say by the last of November. If you get an Irish carpenter and mason (or either of them), they can come up with John Scott.

"I wish you to send me a tarred rope, about seven-eighths of an inch diameter and thirty feet long, for a well-rope for

a windlass for a common draw-bucket; another white rope suitable and long enough for a clothes-line: one tanned sheepskin, and two sheepskins dressed by the leather-dressers.

"Mrs. P. informs me that inquiry has been made for Holland for women's caps. She says long lawn for the caps and clear lawn for the borders are most suitable, and that both should be of middling quality, and should have been inserted in the invoice for the store. Enough of each for a dozen, or a dozen and a half of caps may suffice. She adds that Hanover lace is cheap, and would do well here for cap-borders, &c.

"I will thank you to inform me of the price of the Tortola rum you sent me.

"If I recollect right, I have seen Anderson's essays on agriculture lately advertised by some of the Irish booksellers. I wish to own it, and to receive by John Scott that volume of the two which treats at large of lime and lime-mortar. The Agricultural Society have the book (lent, perhaps, to Mr. Peters), but this place is too remote for borrowing.

"You was deceived in the *lapis calaminaris* sent by Mr. Nichols: 'tis good for nothing, being as coarse as sand; so that no part of it is sustained in the water half a minute, and consequently none of it is fit to enter the eye. Pray send us some that is of the right sort, as we all need it. Dr. Bass formerly gave me what was good.

"My wife observes that no mention is made of her large brass kettle coming on. She proposed that it should be put into one of the large washing-tubs to keep it from bruising on the way. We shall not know how to do without it. She wishes the large hair trunk, which is behind, may be opened, and the woollen articles (including the linings of silk gowns) examined on account of the moths. Be pleased also to inquire if my best suit of cloth and beaver hat are safe at Mrs. Hastings'; they were put into a round bandbox.

"I remain, &c."

John Scott and William George were hired men, in the service of Colonel Pickering. These letters present

a picture of his situation at the time more life-like than any general description by another person could be, and for this reason have been given in detail, although they relate to domestic and ordinary concerns, and such as may, at first thought, be regarded as too trivial to enter into a biography. They have, however, it is deemed, an interest and value quite rare. They give an idea of what it was to prepare for an abode in a new country, far removed from sources of necessary supplies. The matters to which he had to devote his thoughts and his time were infinite in extent and variety, and such as persons who have always lived in old settlements, and in easy reach of whatever is needful, comfortable, and convenient, can hardly realize.

He expected, it is seen, to enter the house he was building, and establish his family in a permanent and happy home, before the snow should fall. To what disappointment he was doomed will shortly appear. His friend, Major Hodgdon, who had formed the scheme of opening a store in Wyoming, was his constant correspondent and agent at Philadelphia. Some passages in his letters to Colonel Pickering may here be added to show the difficulties of transportation at that end of the line.

PHILADELPHIA, July 27th, 1787.

“I am sorry to inform you that nothing of yours from hence is yet on the way to meet you. I have, however, a prospect that they will be coming on in two or three days, and you may rest assured no attention shall be wanting to getting them off, as I know you want some of them exceedingly.”

Not being able to procure transportation by the way of Middletown, Major Hodgdon attempted to get them on by the Wind-gap route, as appears by the following

directions he gave to a person employed for the purpose : —

“ Mr. Clark will inquire for two wagons that are willing to go on with the loads as far as Haller’s tavern, which is two miles this side the Wind-gap, on the road to Wyoming, and about seventy-five miles from Philadelphia. If they are not to be obtained on this side Schools’s tavern, he will deliver the letter to Mr. Schools, who will assist him in getting them ; but, should he not be able to obtain them through him, Mr. Clark will go on inquiring until he does engage them, if it is not until he arrives at Bethlehem. The tavern-keeper there can undoubtedly provide them ; but if, contrary to all expectation, he cannot engage them at Bethlehem, he will desire Mr. Haller to send down wagons for the purpose, provided they can be here speedily, for, at all events, they must soon go on.

“ SAMUEL HODGDON.

“ July 30th, 1787.”

This plan failed. No adequate means of transportation could be obtained by Mr. Clarke by the Wind-gap route. On the 3d of August, Hodgdon, in a letter to Colonel Pickering, after mentioning some other matters, says : “ But it is time that I let you know that nothing is yet forwarded of yours. I have done every thing in my power to procure wagons, but hitherto in vain. I shall be obliged at last to send them on in wagons belonging here. I would avoid this, if possible, for the expense will be double to what would be demanded by returning teams.” “ Having waited,” as he says in a letter of the 4th of August, “ for returning wagons until my whole stock of patience was exhausted,” he agreed upon a price for wagons to carry on the goods, much greater than he had hoped to procure them for. “ If I have erred, it is as a zealous man, and, as such, will readily be pardoned.”

About this time, Congress passed the Ordinance relative to the North-Western Territory. Major Hodgdon, hearing that the appointment of a Governor-General over it was considered as likely to fall upon either General St. Clair or Colonel Pickering, sounded the Colonel on the subject, as follows: "Were it possible you could accede to the appointment, would you go? Would Mrs. Pickering undertake another journey of perhaps *fifteen hundred miles*? The transportation, she should be told, will be principally by water. But I suspect she has had enough of travelling, at least for the present."

Indeed, as the form of Major Hodgdon's questions intimates, another removal of the family could not, at that time, be thought of. It was alike forbidden by Colonel Pickering's private engagements, in erecting his buildings and opening his farm, and his public obligations to devote himself to the establishment of peace and order in the county of Luzerne.

If he had at that time been placed in command of the Western army, it might have given a different turn to the current of events. The effects upon his own fortunes, and those of the country, must for ever remain matters of curious speculation. But it was not so ordered. A very different experience was allotted him.

The actual state of things at Wyoming was not so favorable as his sanguine nature had led him to expect.

The strange fortunes to which, from the beginning of their history and for the period of a generation, that people had been subject, and the frequent alternations of jurisdiction over them, had given rise to a pervading and habitual feeling of insecurity and suspiciousness. The severe policy announced by Pennsylvania, upon the

final establishment of its authority by an irreversible judicial decree, occasioned the bitterest feelings, which the partial protection promised in the quieting act of its legislature did not essentially allay. Whether that act would be carried into effect was doubted by many. Its repeal was apprehended, and, as was soon seen, with just grounds of distrust. The rule laid down by the commissioners appointed to determine the questions in controversy, by which all lands resting upon Connecticut titles, given subsequently to the Trenton decree of 1782, were laid open to forfeiture, exasperated and rendered desperate a large portion of the population, including the most active and formidable young men who had come into the territory "armed" to "man their rights."

These things all combined to spread uneasiness, discontent, and animosity, which agitators of all sorts stood ready to aggravate. This dangerous state of sentiment in the territory was fostered moreover by outside parties. The land companies in Connecticut continued to keep their eyes upon what was going on at Wyoming, and imagined that they had an interest that would be promoted by disturbances there. In co-operation with them, many persons of influence in New York and elsewhere were busy in concerting schemes, based upon the success of efforts to resist the authority of Pennsylvania, looking to the separation of the territory into a distinct State, and to land speculations there, from which they were confident of deriving great advantages. These outside parties regarded with pleasure all insurrectionary movements, and did what they could to embroil affairs between Pennsylvania and the people of Wyoming.

With these views, they secretly encouraged another interest, entirely distinct from theirs, in demanding a repeal of the quieting act. There was a considerable number of persons in Pennsylvania who had purchased Wyoming lands of that government in previous years, when held by the Penn proprietors, or during those intervals when the Connecticut settlers had been driven off and dispossessed. The quieting act had stripped them of their titles, and they were determined never to relax their exertions to have it repealed. Owing to these causes, a combined pressure, which it became constantly more and more evident would succeed, was kept up on the legislature of Pennsylvania to pass a repealing act. The prospect of this roused a just indignation among the whole people of the territory.

To heighten the mischief, and in aid of whatever led to disorder and confusion, there was then a general weakness of authority and a spirit of reckless turbulence pervading some portions of the country, leading in the end to a conviction, throughout the States, that a more efficient government had become necessary ; and at this very time the people were everywhere convulsed by the processes of excited discussions and vehement dissensions, incident to the struggles that resulted in the adoption of the present Federal Constitution.

The influence of all these commotions was felt in the Wyoming district, and fomented passions that soon broke out in scenes of violence. Some passages of Major Hodgdon's letters to Colonel Pickering will illustrate this state of things, and shed light upon the general history of that time.

“PHILADELPHIA, August 31st, 1787.

“I am happy to hear the commissioners are present, and proceeding in the business assigned them. The greatest firmness is become necessary to stop the current that has and will prevail from delay. Some of the gentlemen have much to answer for on this score. If they think so, they will now exert themselves. Colonel Zebulon Butler is this day appointed County Lieutenant, and the militia is to be immediately arranged. The spirit of the people is up, and government, at all hazards, will now be supported. The Assembly comes together next week. Stuart says they will repeal the confirming law. He is laughed at by all men of sense, but persists. The event will be speedily known. Livingston's scheme is well understood here. He is not alone in it. Many considerable characters in York State, and in his British Majesty's Province of Canada, are in the secret and joined in the business; but here it is thought to be harmless from the coloring given. You can best judge of their designs by the movements they make. That country, at all events, will be settled, and the present commotions will facilitate what all wish.”

“PHILADELPHIA, September 29th, 1787.

“Yesterday the question for calling a convention to determine on the adoption of the Constitution, lately recommended, was put. Findley and Whitehill, at the head of seventeen others, opposed it, but, finding the previous question carried, they did not return in the afternoon to the adjournment. The Sergeant-at-Arms was sent to command their attendance. Hearing that they were at Boyd's, he went there, found them, and delivered his message. Whitehill answered that, as there was no house, his orders were impertinent and would not be complied with. This answer being communicated, the Speaker and members, forty-five in number, adjourned until nine o'clock, this morning. At seven o'clock an express arrived from New York, with the agreeable news that Congress—eleven and a half States being present—had unanimously agreed to recommend the new Constitution to

the United States. This, I suppose, will bring the members to the House, at the adjournment to-day, and finish the resolution of yesterday, for calling the convention."

"To-day again the *nineteen* refused giving their attendance. An order was signed for taking them into custody by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the Clerk of the House was directed to attend him. A number of volunteer gentlemen also attended him. The whole proceeded to Boyd's, where *two* only were found. These were apprehended, and brought by force of arms and seated. One of them rose and plead duress, and tendered his fine of five shillings, and demanded liberty to depart. But he was immediately silenced, and the business was introduced and passed, as you will perceive by the enclosed paper. This conduct has put an *end* to the constitutional interest in this city. The principals in the business are universally despised, and their abettors hide their heads. The House, having finished this and some other business, dissolved themselves; and writs are out for holding an election on the ninth of next month, at which time Franklin may try what interest he has got in your county." •

"PHILADELPHIA, October 4th, 1787.

"Enclosed you have the papers, and the minutes of the House, to the close of the session; and the curious defence made by the *abandoned nineteen* for their secession from the Assembly, on Friday and Saturday last. State warrants were talked of to apprehend certain obnoxious characters for aiding the Sergeant-at-Arms in bringing them to their duty. But the Chief Justice, being consulted, put an end to the measure. He declared that the mass of the people were so incensed at their conduct that tumult and further outrage would be the inevitable consequence. So the matter rests for the present. You will see Whitehill, the Jesuit, conspicuous in the debate on the last Wyoming bill. Distraction and confusion are essential to the existence of such consummate villains. The terms are harsh, but I confess I am exceeding angry with them. I will leave them and politics at this time."

The state of things in Luzerne county gave uneasiness to Colonel Pickering's friends at Philadelphia. They felt that he might need encouragement, and they gave it, as in the following characteristic letter from his family physician, intimate associate, and earnest compatriot : —

“ PHILADELPHIA, August 30th, 1787.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have only time to assure you that you will meet with the steady support of your friends in executing the late law of the State of which you are appointed a commissioner. Perhaps a short visit to Philadelphia during the approaching session of the Assembly might be useful. Keep a *good heart* and put a *bold face* upon things. *All will end well*. The new Federal government, like a new Continental wagon, will upset our State dung-cart, with all its dirty contents (reverend and irreverend); and thereby restore order and happiness to Pennsylvania. From the conversation of the members of the Convention, there is reason to believe the Federal Constitution will be wise, vigorous, safe, free, and full of dignity. General Washington, it is said, will be placed at the head of the new government, or, in the style of my simile, will drive the new wagon.

“ With compliments to Mrs. Pickering, I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

“ BENJAMIN RUSH.”

The first explosion of the combustible elements that had so long been gathering among the people of Wyoming, took place under circumstances thus described by Colonel Pickering in his letter to his son, already largely cited, written in 1818. —

“ In May, 1787, a quorum of the commissioners* met at Wyoming, now Wilkesbarre, and gave notice of the mode in

* The board of commissioners consisted of Colonels Timothy Pickering, William Montgomery, and Stephen Balliott.

which they meant to proceed in examining claims, and called on the people to prepare the requisite evidence to support them, to be presented to the commissioners at their next meeting, to take place at Wilkesbarre, in August or September following. Many claims were then presented and examined; and the commissioners were proceeding regularly, with a fair prospect of completing their work in a reasonable time: when they were interrupted, and, for their personal safety, obliged to retire from the county. John Franklin, a shrewd and resolute man, the prime agent of the Susquehanna Company, and the chosen commander of the militia, with the title of Colonel, had been for some time visiting all the settlements, to stir up the people to an open and forcible opposition to the government of Pennsylvania. Evidence of these practices having been communicated (I know not by whom) to Chief Justice M'Kean, he issued his warrant for the arrest of Franklin, on a charge of *treason* against the State. The sheriff of the county (for it had been completely organized, under the authority committed to me, as before mentioned), chosen by the people (according to law and the usage of Pennsylvania) and living among them, was not deemed the proper person to execute the warrant, though a very worthy man; but who either would not have been able to arrest Franklin, or, by doing it, rendering himself obnoxious to the mass of turbulent men, might be in too great danger of their vengeance. The Chief Justice therefore directed his warrant to four gentlemen of known fortitude, two or three of whom had been officers in the Revolutionary war. On their arrival they showed me the Chief Justice's warrant. Franklin was at that time about twenty or twenty-five miles lower down the river, preparing his adherents for the explosion. In three or four days he came up to Wilkesbarre. The four gentlemen seized him. Two of their horses were in my stable, which were sent to them; but soon my servant returned on one of them, with a message from the gentlemen, that people were assembling in numbers, and requesting me to come with what men were near me, to prevent a rescue. I took loaded pistols in my hands, and went with another servant to their aid. Just as I met them, Frank-

lin threw himself off from his horse and renewed his struggle with them. His hair was dishevelled and face bloody from preceding efforts. I told the gentlemen they would never carry him off unless his feet were tied under his horse's belly. I sent for a cord. The gentlemen remounted him, and my servant tied his feet. Then one, taking his bridle, another following behind, and the others riding one on each side, they whipped up his horse, and were soon beyond the reach of his friends.

“ But this open aid given by me and my servants, in securing Franklin, exposed me to the vengeful resentment of his adherents. I would have avoided this step if I had not believed the welfare of the good people of the county and the public peace depended on securing the person of that daring man. My particular friends, discreet men, who knew infinitely better than I the character of his adherents, assured me they would assemble and retaliate on me the treatment of their leader, and probably do me serious bodily harm ; and advised me to go out of the way and secrete myself until the fury of the storm should pass over. This was in the afternoon of the 2d of October. I retired to a close wood not far from the house I occupied. In the evening I returned to my family. Some of the well-disposed neighbors assembled with their arms. The rising of Franklin's men was expected from the opposite side of the river. I desired my friends to place sentinels along the bank, where they might discover the first movements for crossing the river ; and then sat down to sup with my family. Before I had finished that meal a sentinel came in haste from the river, and informed me that Franklin's adherents were crossing in boats. My house was within a furlong of the river. I took up a loaded pistol and three or four small biscuits, and retired to a neighboring field. Soon the yell of the insurgents apprised me of their arrival at my house. I listened to their noises a full half-hour, when, the clamor ceasing, I judged that the few armed neighbors, who had previously entered and fastened the doors, had surrendered. This was the fact. The rioters (as I afterwards learnt from your mother) searched the house for me, and for concealed arms, if any there were.

“While I was listening, Griffith Evans, secretary to the board of commissioners, and a lodger at my house, retiring from it, fortunately taking the same course, joined me. Believing that when they should have searched the house in vain, they would proceed to the near fields to find me, I told Mr. Evans it would be well to retire still farther. When we had gained the side of Wilkesbarre mountain, we laid ourselves down, and got some sleep. In the morning I descried, at the distance of a mile or more, a log-house, which was on a lot of land I had purchased, and near a mile from the village, and occupied by an honest German, whose daughter lived with your mother, as a maid. I proposed to Mr. Evans, as he had no personal injury to apprehend from the rioters, to go to the log-house, and ask the German, in my behalf, to go down to my house (which, as his daughter was there, would be perfectly natural), and if he could see your mother, inquire what was the state of things, and whether I could return with safety. Mr. Evans waited his return; and then brought me word from your mother that I must remain concealed; for they were still searching for me. It was now about eleven o'clock. I told Mr. Evans that, as I could not return to Wilkesbarre, we had better proceed for Philadelphia, and inform the executive of the state of things at Wyoming. He readily assented; and we immediately commenced our march. It was through pathless woods; and we had no provisions except the three or four biscuits I had put into my pocket the preceding evening. That we might not get lost, I proposed turning short to our left, to strike the road leading from Wyoming; and thence take our departure with more safety. We did so; and then again darting into the woods, proceeded, as nearly as we could judge, in a line parallel to the road, but not in sight of it. A little before sun-setting, we came to a small run of water which I supposed to be the ‘*nine-mile run*,’ being at that distance from Wilkesbarre. I therefore desired Mr. Evans to go cautiously down the run, till he should strike the road which crossed it. He did so; it was not far off. On his return, we concluded to lie down, to get some sleep; intending to rise, when the moon should be up, at about two the next morning, and prosecute our jour-

ney. About two miles from the nine-mile run, was Bear Creek, a stream perhaps forty or fifty feet wide, and without a bridge. Having several times travelled that road, I knew when we approached it. There I thought it probable the insurgents had posted a small guard to intercept me, leaving their main guard at a deserted cabin four miles back. Mr. Evans proposed to advance alone to reconnoitre; and, if he discovered there any armed men, to halloo, that I might escape into the woods. I told him that was impracticable; fatigued, and destitute of provisions, I could not fly; that each of us had a loaded pistol, that I presumed the guard at the Creek would not exceed three men; that if they attempted to take us, we must each kill his man, when the third would be glad to escape. With this determination, we proceeded. The Creek was not guarded; we forded it, and then marched at our ease. In the morning we reached the first inhabited house, about twenty-five miles from Wilkesbarre. Here we were refreshed with a comfortable breakfast, and then went on our way. Having travelled some miles farther, we came to some farmers' houses, where we hired horses; and then continued our journey to Philadelphia.

"On my return to Wilkesbarre, I was informed that the arrangement of the guards, to intercept me, was precisely as I had conjectured. A subaltern's command marched to the deserted cabin, whence three men were detached to Bear Creek, where they waited till night, when they returned to the cabin; concluding that I had reached the Creek before them.

"The insurgents, soon brought to reflection, and deprived of the counsel and direction of their leader, Franklin, began to relent, and sent a petition to the executive council, acknowledging their offence, and praying for a pardon. This was readily granted; and Colonel Denison, the Luzerne Councillor, went up with the pardon. It was natural to infer from this, that I might return in safety to my family. I proceeded accordingly; but, when within twenty-five miles, I sent by my servant who was with me a letter to your mother, desiring her to consult some of the discreet neighbors, who were my friends, relative to my return. She did so. They

were of opinion, that I could not return with safety at present. So I went back to Philadelphia.

“In September, 1787, the convention of delegates from the several States, to form a Constitution for the United States, which had been sitting several months in Philadelphia, concluded their labors. They recommended that the Constitution should be submitted to a convention of delegates, to be chosen in each State by the people thereof under the recommendation of its legislature, for their assent and ratification. Such a convention being called by the legislature of Pennsylvania, *the people of Luzerne county chose ME their delegate, to represent them in it!* This convention assembled in Philadelphia (where I still remained), I think early in December. After a great deal of discussion, the convention assented to and ratified the Constitution. It was engrossed on parchment, and received the signatures of nearly all the delegates, including the opposers while under discussion, with the exception of some three or four obstinate men, and, to the best of my recollection of their characters, as ignorant as obstinate. The opposers of its adoption were the extra-republicans, or democrats—the same sort of men who afterwards were called antifederalists, and who uniformly opposed all the leading measures of the general government.

“I could now no longer doubt that I might return to Wyoming. I arrived there the beginning of January, 1788.”

The above narrative was written by Colonel Pickering from memory thirty years afterwards, and evidently without recurring to his papers. It is, however, remarkably in accordance with them, as appears from some here added, which will, moreover, enable the reader more fully to bring the occurrences into view. The following letter to his wife was written on the third day after his escape from the mob at Wyoming, probably at the place where he and Evans obtained horses. They had made some thirty miles' progress through the for-

est, having spent much time in reconnoitring, and slept three nights in the woods on bare ground.

“SAVAGES, October 5th, 1787.

“MY DEAR BECKEY,

“I am here in health and safety, and shall presently set out for Philadelphia. My only concern is for you, Betsey, and our dear babes. But I think the men in arms are not capable of hurting or insulting any of you. I am sure none but savages would do it. Now that I have escaped them, I hope they will leave you in peace. I have not seen John Scott, nor know his business in Philadelphia. But if the party leave you, I think you and the family had best remain where you are at present, for I persuade myself all opposition will soon cease. I am morally sure that government will take decided measures to support its authority, and I may soon return to you in safety. I have conversed with Esquire Gore, who is to deliver this; and begged him to advise and assist you in every thing. He is a judicious man, well knows the people, and can and will give you the best advice, by which I think it best your measures should be governed. My heart has bled for your distresses. If God spares my life, my future increased attentions will, I hope, in some degree, counterbalance your extraordinary sufferings. Kiss for me all the dear boys, and give Betsey my very kind affection. With a heart devoted to your safety and happiness, I remain yours while life shall last.

“T. PICKERING.”

Upon reaching Philadelphia, he wrote again to his wife. The letter is given entire, because it shows the extreme inconveniences to which he was put in being suddenly driven from home, at that season, when his presence was so much needed to secure the crops, just ready to be harvested; to get his buildings fit for occupation; and to make a general preparation for the approaching winter: and, also, because it may serve as a specimen of the letters he was constantly writing to his

wife, when separated from her and the family, as he was, for long intervals of time, during the greater part of his life. They are found without number scattered through the mass of his manuscripts, and would fill volumes. As has been stated, he ever considered the care of his household a duty of the very first moment. In previous years, when bearing the burden of the office of Quartermaster-General of the Revolutionary army, and subsequently while at the head of great departments of the general government in the Cabinet at Washington, and in both Houses of Congress, the oversight of his family was never interrupted. He thought of and provided for the minutest details that related to the comfort and welfare of his distant home, and to the condition of his fields, stock, and produce. His wife was faithful and competent to the trust he reposed in her, followed his counsels, and conducted his affairs with the utmost carefulness and good judgment. No woman ever better merited the most honorable title a woman can bear, a help-meet for her husband.

“PHILADELPHIA, October 10th, 1787.

“MY DEAREST BECKEY,

“You will easily conceive the joy I felt when Mr. Bowman announced that you, Betsey, and the children were all safe and in tranquillity. God be praised! I trust we shall remain uninjured, and that I may soon return to you in peace. The government will eventually do what is requisite to ensure the quiet of the county. It is probable, forgiveness will be extended to all who took up arms after Franklin was taken, provided they continue, what they now have professed they will be, peaceable subjects. I am charmed with the account of your fortitude.

“Agreeably to my advice by Esquire Gore, I suppose the carpenters are at work. I wish the house to go forward as fast as may be, excepting the chimney, which let rest till I come

up. If Dean remains, he may be employed in digging the potatoes as soon as they are ripe, which must be, I imagine, by the close of this week. I would have the bulk of them laid in heaps, on a high spot in the field, and properly covered, to secure them through the winter. As soon as some of the corn is hard enough, he may begin to gather and dry enough to grind for mush. There are several sorts of potatoes. You can try them all, and choose what you like best for family use. Let them be put in distinct heaps in the field. William George and George can assist Dean in these things. Doctor Sprague may go on with the stable, according to my orders, taking George Geary's directions in the execution. Dean can assist the Doctor in all the work; and this I would have him to do, in preference to digging potatoes, &c., which William and George can do when Dean is engaged with the Doctor. I would have the horses well taken care of, and get some grain every day. Some of the people who owe me grain can perhaps furnish oats. There are some winter squashes as well as pumpkins among the corn, which should be brought home, and put where they will be dry and safe from frost till used.

"I shall detain John Scott a few days, that, if government or myself should have occasion to send to Wyoming, a conveyance may be ready. I shall send a few necessaries by John, particularly some tea.

"The family will want meat. Mr. Bowman can employ Wm. Ross or Nathan Cary to purchase another steer, heifer, or cow for beef, and William George can put it up. You know where to get money. Save as much of the bacon as you can, and keep enough of the molasses to use for beer and with mush, instead of milk. Direct a plenty of vegetables to be always boiled, to save the meat; and sometimes perhaps roasted potatoes may serve the men for supper.

"Our friends here are generally well. I am myself in perfect health, and the pain in my shoulder has nearly left me. With my love to Betsey and the boys, I bid you a cordial adieu.

"T. PICKERING."

Two days after, he wrote to her again, as follows : —

“Mr. Horton proposes to set out to-morrow morning for Wyoming. I write this just to inform you of my health and impatience to return to you. But I cannot fix the day, because I am not informed of the progress made in detaching the troops destined for Wilkesbarre. That troops are raising for the purpose will be known amongst you ; yet you need not speak of it. I felt disposed to go up before them, but Mr. Hollenback and Mr. Bowman advised to the contrary. I shall endeavor to hasten the measure as much as possible. Kiss the dear boys for me. My kind love to Betsey, most affectionately adieu !”

It will be remembered by the reader that Colonel Pickering, upon hearing of the near approach of the rioters, left his home in the evening. The situation of his wife may be imagined. He had gone alone into the wilderness, without any provisions but a few biscuits snatched from the table : what course he would take, or what would be his fate, none could tell. Evans, the secretary of the commissioners, and a boarder in the family, had also disappeared. The remarkable circumstance that they happened to meet and recognize each other in the fields bordering on the woods, after the night had set in, was then unknown. The rioters gathered around the house with wild yells of rage, overpowered and disarmed the men-servants and a few neighbors, who, apprehending the outrage, had collected to defend it, forced an entrance, and ransacked it from garret to cellar, breathing wrath and uttering threats of violence. Failing in the object of their search, they withdrew with sullen imprecations ; and Mrs. Pickering, with her sister and children, were left with none to protect them.

It must have been a night of horror. In her delicate situation, with an infant not three weeks old, her condition, as she was wont to relate it, was one of extreme distress. She had been but a few months in the place, was a stranger among a strange people, most of whom were infuriated against her husband. The shock was frightful, and for a time broke her down. But she soon rose above the terrors and sufferings of the occasion. Although the gentlest and meekest of her sex, this woman possessed a latent energy of character, always equal to the emergency. In a few days her self-composure was recovered, her spirit and strength revived, and she took decisive measures. Her sagacity enabled her to appreciate, better than her husband had done or afterwards did, the dangerous elements that were fermenting in the minds of the people of that region, and she resolved to place at once beyond their reach as many of her family as she could. She herself, having an infant in her arms, could not escape from the scene. She felt, too, that some one must remain to look after the house, the farm, and the stock, and supervise the operations of the carpenters and other mechanics already engaged on the place. Her sister would not leave her.

A faithful female domestic was put in charge of the four little boys, the youngest of them a year and eight months, the eldest just eight years, of age. Two trusty male servants were directed forthwith to prepare the wagon, — all the horses were to be tackled to it, — and, within a week, the two men, the women, and the children, with such articles as they might need in their long and rough journey, were on their way to Philadelphia.

Some passages of letters will here be read with interest.

“ WILKESBARRE, October 16th, 1787.

“ MY DEAR MR. PICKERING,

“ Mr. Bowman arrived last Saturday evening, and gave me your favor of the 10th inst. I was made happy by the account it contained of your welfare. Since you left me, till within these two or three days, my mind has been so agitated, that I have been quite unfit for any business. I was, at first, determined to leave the place. So strong was my intention, that I thought myself able to travel through the swamp on foot, and carrying my infant, if no ready conveyance presented. On thinking more of the matter, I altered my resolution, and concluded to send the children, though contrary to everybody's opinion that I talked with on the subject. I was repeatedly told my family was in no danger. I could not believe people that had used the family as some of them had without any reason. I thought any circumstance occurring which did not agree with their ideas, I and the family might be treated in a manner not more favorable. It is possible you may disapprove of my sending the children, but my anxiety for their safety was so great I could not keep them with me. I had much rather suffer myself than have them suffer, should it be the case. I am exceedingly distressed that you think of returning. I fear you will not be able to live in safety. You have strong enemies, and they are of the worst kind, secret ones many of them. There have been many reports of the threats that have been thrown out, not against persons only, but their property and their cattle: how true they are, I cannot say, but am inclined to think not without some foundation.

“ I remain yours affectionately,

“ REBECCA PICKERING.”

“ WILKESBARRE, October 22d, 1787; Sunday evening.

“ MY DEAR MR. PICKERING,

“ John Scott arrived here last evening. I am distressed at the idea of your returning under the present circumstances,

without sufficient force to secure your person ; for, whatever may be the general opinion, your friends, few in number, are convinced you will be taken prisoner, if not ill-used. Mr. Bowman will write to you. I think you will pay attention to what he says. You may attribute what I say to the weakness of my sex. All is at present peaceable, but time will show if from right principles. Your enemies wish to get you. Then they think they can make their own terms with government about Franklin. They will use you as he is used, and, finally, they think, compel the State to release him, or you must suffer. I beg you to think seriously of these circumstances. I think the State would not want you to fall a sacrifice to their resentments. Your family, too, has a claim upon your life, when it can be preserved with honor to yourself and justice to your country. I look upon most people here with a suspicious eye.

“ I remain, with affection, sincerely yours,

“ REBECCA PICKERING.”

These earnest remonstrances against his return probably produced on his mind the opposite effect from that designed. Her heroic preference to remain unprotected rather than have him exposed to danger, so wrought upon his affection, gallantry, and manly courage, that he felt, as he read her words, inspired with a determination to fly to her rescue and defence whatever the hazard to himself. He could not, moreover, be persuaded that her fears were fully authorized. The rioters had apparently repented of their violence, — had sued for pardon, which, after consultation with him, had been granted by the government on their promise of good behavior. He was inclined to think that their demonstration of rage against him was the effect of sudden excitement on the seizure of Franklin and his agency in it, and that the regret they had expressed in their petition was sincere. At any rate, he resolved to return forthwith to Wyoming. On

his way, he wrote back to Major Hodgdon, under date of October 19th, 1787, from Easton. The letter relates mostly to business matters, as the following passage in particular : —

“ As I go forward with an intention of getting up my house, and hastening its completion, so far as to render it habitable, I must beg you to procure for me a few more articles, and send the whole as quick as possible to George Fry at Middletown. Two boxes of glass, 7 by 9. I saw some at Towers’s, in Market Street, for which he asked £5, single box, but offered me two at £4 15s. each. This was Bristol glass. One fault of the Trieste glass is, that ’tis wavy, and shows a thousand surfaces in one pane. If you have opportunity, pray ask the advice of a sensible glazier about the proper choice. One box of chocolate at Captain Donnel’s. One barrel of brown sugar; twenty-five or thirty pounds of tea. Please to call at Mr. Doz’s for a bundle of mine. In it you will find a number of papers, and among them the invoice I sent you, and another made out on a half-sheet of paper on the two sides, in which latter are the articles I should wish to have, if there were means to procure them; but I will urge nothing at present that will embarrass you in respect to money, farther than the three articles before mentioned, of glass, sugar, and tea. The chocolate is already paid for. If, however, in looking over the invoice aforementioned, you see any other articles which you deem necessary (for I forget most of them), I shall be much obliged by your sending them. Please to forward duplicate accounts of the whole. The papers left at Mr. Doz’s may come by any good conveyance.

“ I feel myself very sensibly obliged by the readiness manifested by my friends to receive and take care of the children. I shall write you about them after I have consulted my wife.”

A postscript to this letter has the request : —

“ Please to write a line to Mr. Williams on my situation, but not in the *dismals*.”

He had sent John Scott forward to apprise his wife of his coming, and then to return and meet him. The following letter gives some of the incidents of his progress: —

“ZAWITZ (that is SAVAGE’s), Sunday
evening, October 21st, 1787.

“MY DEAR BECKEY,

“I presume John Scott arrived at Wilkesbarre to-day by noon. By him you will have learnt that I met Mr. Horton, five miles on this side Bethlehem, and that he informed me that Captain Schott had letters for me, but was gone to Easton. So I rode on, and turned off for Easton, where I found him on Thursday evening. Those letters, and Schott’s information, induced me to determine to go to you, instead of sending for you and Betsey to come out, for which I had made preparations. For, by your letter, my dear, I found you had no thought of leaving Wilkesbarre. The repairs of the wagon were not made at Bethlehem, as I expected. So this detained George. However, I reached Nazareth in time to enable us to proceed to Haller’s last night. This morning I found many things to be done to the wagon, which, with stowing some loading, took us till half-past eleven o’clock. The horses do very well. Nevertheless, I intend to go no farther than Luce’s, at Tobyhanna, to-morrow, and feed the horses well, to enable us to start very early on Tuesday morning, so as to reach Kelly’s before dark. If John Scott sets out on Tuesday by noon to meet me, it will do. I am in health and spirits, and impatient to embrace you. With my love to Betsey, for a short time I bid you tenderly adieu!”

It seems that Colonel Pickering started for home unaccompanied by a military force. It was concluded by the authorities, and was undoubtedly his judgment, that it was best to show confidence in the promises of good behavior that had been made. Considering, however, how deeply his wife’s mind was impressed with the apprehension of danger at Wyoming, he felt it his duty to

place her beyond it, and for that reason had made arrangements in Philadelphia for her return thither with her sister. His idea was that one of the hired men should accompany them, bearing the infant in his arms. He expected to meet them on the way, and then himself pass on to Wilkesbarre. Thus his family would be reunited, and placed in safety and tranquillity, while he attended to his affairs and public duties at Wyoming. He did not believe that any violence would be offered him ; but, if it should, he preferred to meet it alone, and without any embarrassment from, or exposure of, his wife and family. The letters brought by Captain Schott informed him of his wife's determination not to leave Wilkesbarre. She probably thought it impracticable, or at least unsafe, to transport the infant in the manner he proposed, and that the journey was more than could prudently be encountered. But her prevailing feeling, no doubt, was a determination, if he would come back, to share his lot. She justly thought that he was over confident and confiding, and that her vigilance and caution would be useful and needful. Hence her refusal to carry out his plan in this particular. On being apprised of her determination, he hastened on to meet her at Wyoming.

Soon after the foregoing letter was written, John Scott made his appearance. The import and result of the communications he brought will be seen in the following letter. The disappointment to which Colonel Pickering found himself doomed was one of the bitterest he had ever experienced. The constant aim of his exertions, the cherished vision of his life, was to realize the happiness of a home. His public employments had separated

him much from his family ; but when he resolved upon spending his days as a farmer, the chief attraction to that mode of life had been that it would give him a quiet and lasting home. But now his children were scattered, and he could not bring them together : he was separated from his wife, forbidden to return to his house and lands, and left, as he expressed it, an exile. As he turned back alone to Philadelphia, his heart was heavy within him. But the energies of his nature could not be broken, nor the elastic activity of his faculties long impaired. As he could neither relieve his wife of the burdens and trials of her situation, nor share them with her in personal presence, he did what he could to help her to sustain and meet them by advice and directions embracing the minutest details : —

“ LUCE’S, at TOBYHANNA, at break of day, October 23d, 1787.

“ MY DEAR BECKEY,

“ This day I should have proceeded to Wilkesbarre, but that you advise me not to come. I am mortified. But Mr. Bowman has given me sufficient reasons to justify your opinion that it would be unsafe. I shall, therefore, return to Philadelphia, and wait the measures of government. John Scott, doubtless, has told you of the preparations I had made at Bethlehem to bring out you and Betsey. The infant I intended William George should have brought in his arms till I should meet you. The new side-saddle I have retained, because it will be useful to you and Betsey, whether you remain at Wilkesbarre or remove. And, my dear, as I have followed your advice in not going in at present, I trust you will attend to mine, — that you lose no time in learning to ride on horseback. I entreat you to have the pacing horse saddled every fair day, and ride a mile or two, if no more. A little daily practice will make it easy to you. After you can sit steady in your seat, try Mr. Hollenback’s sorrel mare, as she trots easy ; for, otherwise, should you be obliged to mount

a trotting horse, you may find it hard to sit steady. Pray let no business prevent your riding every fair day. Betsey will ride, of course, whenever it will be convenient to her. On my return, I hope I shall be at a loss to determine which rides best.

“ You may imagine I was surprised at the sight of the children in Philadelphia! But, my dear, I do not disapprove of your sending them thither. I thought, indeed, that it might not have been necessary. But you consulted your *feelings*,—the feelings of a *mother*,—and I was satisfied. On the same principle, I set out to bring you down to them, determined not to consult your judgment or my own, but merely your *feelings*; for, if these were constantly agitated and alarmed, I feared you might lose your health. Sally told me your distresses had much lessened your ability to suckle the child. I am pleased to find you restored.

“ The children are distributed among our friends. Tim at Mr. Doz’s, and is to go to Master Todd’s school; Henry at Captain Faulkener’s, and is to go to his old Master’s, Yerkes; Charles’s bright eyes please Nancy Cunningham, and William, with Sally, is at her mother’s. Captain Faulkener went to Mr. Doz’s of his own accord, and pressed to take home with him *two* of the children. Mrs. Hastings desired you might go to her house. I told Sally to wash for all the children, and to be sure to let William have his portion of milk. One day I met Master Yerkes. He asked kindly after the family, particularly the children, adding, ‘ I love the children.’

“ I send three pairs of woollen gloves, which I bought for you, Betsey, and Dolly, expecting you to ride with them. Perhaps they may still be useful. I send, also, six pounds of Bohea tea, for which I ran in debt at Nazareth, at three shillings and sixpence per pound. The tea you can barter for necessities.

“ At Haller’s I put into the wagon the box of sugar (I believe the key of the brass lock is with a large bunch of keys that used to lie in the beaufet), the barrels Nos. 1 and 2 (as I suppose), the two baskets of crockery, &c., in one of which I saw the spout of a coffee-pot, a hair-powder box, containing, as I suppose, ironmongery, and among it, perhaps,

some of the bed-screws. The large brass-kettle, in the tub, I put into the Bethlehem stage at Philadelphia, intending to forward it from Bethlehem to Haller's in my own wagon, whenever it should return, and it is now in the wagon. At Learn's I got a pailful of apples for you and Betsey.

"The books, I find, were buried under the office floor. I hinted this measure to Esquire Gore; but it won't do. Let them be taken up, or they will all be ruined. Let them be taken out, and wiped, and set singly on the office tables and benches till they are perfectly dry. Then they may be again packed; and, if you think proper, they may be put in handy packages, with newspapers, and, well tied with twine, be distributed among the *honest* neighbors. Probably the widow Stewart would receive some of them, and of our other effects. I mentioned *handy* packages, because in small parcels our effects may be concealed by the neighbors. Each package may be numbered and invoiced.

"Let Betsey look over all the papers and books that were in the small sea-chest and medicine box; and let all the books of accounts, and the papers of accounts, receipts, &c., be selected, and some means determined on for their certain preservation. Among these also preserve the book, marked on one cover, Invoice of Books, in which also are lists of our goods. The red-covered pocket-books contain almost all the accounts with the people for what I have trusted them. But there is Mr. Ochmigh's account, among my papers, of salt, &c., delivered by him. All these valuable papers had best be sent out, if danger should be apprehended. My portmanteau would hold them all, and John Scott, or other trusty hand (and perhaps another might be best, as he is so well known), might be sent out on purpose, whenever you should think best. Perhaps it may be advisable to pack in paper, and send up these valuable account-books and papers, and lodge them with Mr. Mann, or other honest, unsuspecting person, to be locked up in the bottom of some of their chests.

"As the Indian-corn is ripe, let enough be ground, from time to time, to make mush every night, or with, once or twice a week, rye mush, or roasted or boiled potatoes, by way of change. Spare meat and fish as much as possible. If one or

two of the best of the shotes were put up in a pen, they could be fattened with corn and slops, to be fit to kill. Part with no more molasses. I believe it will be best to give tea oftener to the workmen; and, to make it more palatable, get half a dozen cheap cups and saucers of Hollenback. I send you a dozen small pewter table-spoons, for which also I ran in debt at Nazareth. Will not tea also take less sugar than chocolate, if the tea is not made too strong? As the children are gone, more milk may be spared to the workmen; but do not deny yourself cream. The skimmed milk may be mixed with the new milk for the men; 'tis done generally in this State. When the cows go on the flats they will give a flush of milk.

"I would have oats got of people who owe me, or purchased, to keep the horses in order, or rather to get them so. For what you find it necessary to buy, I will take care to make satisfactory payment; only engage as little *cash* as possible.

"I think of nothing more at present,—unless you were to have an invoice taken of such goods as remain in the corn barn and store-room, that, in case of plunder, I may know what is lost.

"I am sorry that my watch has disappeared. I took it out to seal the letter in which I enclosed the intercepted letters, which, you remember, I meant to send off to council just before I left you, and I must have laid it down, and left it on the trunk. I soon missed it after I left the house, and constantly called on Evans to know the hour, as he had his watch with him. There is a possibility that it might be pulled out of my fob by the bushes, but it is improbable. The great-coat I hope you will find. .

"I hoped to have seen and kissed Betsey to-night, as well as you: I embrace her in my heart. I wish I could pay up all arrears as easy and with as much pleasure as I shall pay hers when we meet, and again dwell together.

"Adieu! my dear Beckey, and kiss for me your infant. Adieu, my dear sister Betsey. Heaven guard your lives and health, and grant us soon a joyful meeting!

"T. PICKERING.

“P. S. My respects to Mr. Bowman. I thank him for his letter, but have no time or means to answer it.”

“At HALLER’S TAVERN, Tuesday evening, October 23d, 1787.

“MY DEAR BECKEY,

“Thus far I am on my return to Philadelphia. John Scott with George left me at Luce’s this morning, and by to-morrow noon I expect they will reach Wilkesbarre with the wagon. Besides the articles mentioned in mine, of this morning, I put into the wagon five kitchen chairs, and a pair of kitchen andirons, that were not packed with any thing else at Haller’s. Besides the new side-saddle, there are in the wagon two new bridles, one for you and one for Betsey; keep them for your use alone, and let them be carried into the store-room, every time after using them, and *be careful not to let the bits grow rusty*. I observed a flour barrel at Haller’s with the head knocked in, which exposed to view two small pewter dishes; these I took out and have sent on. I put them in the large brass kettle. I recollect no other article except two taps and faucets, wrapped in brown paper, and which are in the wagon box.

“I have enclosed a few additional directions which, when you here read, hand to John Scott.

“I had intended to have sent in the wagon the small bedstead for Betsey, that she might no longer sleep on the floor; but when I fixed the wagon here on Sunday morning, it took up so much time, that I loaded in a hurry, and forgot the bedstead, it not coming in sight; and now Haller tells me there is no bedstead here, and that both were formerly sent on; if so, the small bedstead is lost.

“With constant affection I remain, my dear Beckey, ever yours,

“T. PICKERING.”

These letters illustrate what has been particularly mentioned, and it is designed to keep in view in this biography, a trait in Colonel Pickering’s character, most marked in all the periods of his life, a faithful, constant, and earnest care for the welfare and comfort of his

family, providing for their daily wants, directing the management of the household, and extending advice to the minutest and most ordinary matters. No distance, no elevation of official position, no weight of public affairs, was ever allowed to prevent or interrupt the discharge of this, felt by him to be his highest duty, most sacred and most honorable trust. The circumstances in which he was placed required the utmost diligence, frugality, and anxious labor on his part in all the stages of his Wyoming experience. It is thought that this could not, in any way, be so effectually or satisfactorily presented as in the documents that have been adduced. The memoirs of no one among the eminent men of our country lead through such scenes as occurred during Colonel Pickering's residence on the then frontiers of Pennsylvania. His toils, adventures, trials, and sufferings were without a parallel, as will still more strikingly appear in a subsequent chapter. The present one may be brought to a close by the following letter, written a week or two after his return to Philadelphia, and dated from that place. It gives a summary of the events just related, and discloses his views and feelings in reference to the causes and influences that led to them.

“NOVEMBER 17th, 1787.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“You will have heard of the disturbances at Wyoming, whither I had moved my family. I have forborne to write particularly, because I could write nothing favorably. However, the prospect is now changed; and I expect peace will be shortly fully established in that country. The government of Pennsylvania appears disposed to do every thing requisite for that end. The troubles originated with a few villains of some ability, but chiefly of desperate fortunes, who had formed a plan to erect a new State in that and the

adjacent country of New York ; and taking advantage of the disaffection of a number of the Connecticut settlers at Wyoming, whose prejudices and resentments against Pennsylvania had been coeval with their settlement in this State, had really drawn into the plot a considerable number of men. But the capture of John Franklin, who was their leader to execute the plot, has disconcerted all their measures. The State have ordered in some militia for the present, and a bill has had two readings to authorize the Council to raise and post there a permanent military force. This will overawe the insurgents (who are all dispersed), and effectually establish the authority of the State and peace of the county, I trust, without bloodshed. The principal conspirators lived in the States of Connecticut and New York. Their plot was so far advanced that a Connecticut lawyer had actually drawn up a Constitution for their intended new State, which was to be called *Westmoreland*, the name of the Wyoming district when a county under the Connecticut jurisdiction. The pretence of the conspirators, who were members of the Susquehanna Company, by which they deluded the people, was, that this company, having made a fair purchase of the Indians of the *soil*, they had still a right to hold it, and that no act of Pennsylvania and Connecticut could divest them of it. The fact is that the whole country in dispute lies within the bounds of the Pennsylvania charter. Connecticut claimed a right to it, as falling within her charter, extending it, according to the words of it, to the South Sea. This dispute was referred by the two States (agreeably to the Articles of Confederation) to a Continental Court, the members of which were mutually agreed on by the two States. This court sat at Trenton in December, 1782; and, after a hearing of counsel on both sides during many days, they decreed, *unanimously*, that both the soil and jurisdiction belong to Pennsylvania. This gave a terrible shock to the Susquehanna Company, and their settlers at Wyoming; and, if Pennsylvania had then manifested any degree of generosity or magnanimity, — if she had, indeed, consulted merely her own interest, — she would have quieted the settlers in their old possessions, which they had

derived by titles, which they supposed to be good, from the Susquehanna Company. But, instead of this, the conduct of the State has consisted of a series of impolitic measures, sometimes lenient, sometimes severe, and, through the abuse of power by the persons appointed to execute the orders of the State, sometimes cruel and oppressive. These circumstances, together with the discontents generally prevailing throughout the United States, the rebellion in Massachusetts, and the prospect of an entire dissolution of the Federal Union, have encouraged the villains, before referred to, to form and prepare to execute their wicked plot before mentioned.

"I have just heard from my wife at Wyoming. She is very well. She expresses much solicitude to hear from her son John. Tim, Henry, Charles, and William, are with our friends in this city. The infant, Edward (born the 12th of September), is with my wife at Wyoming. Her sister, also, is with her. A Mr. Bowman, a lawyer and a very clever man, is in my family, and has remained at Wyoming during all the disturbances. He was educated at Cambridge, and is known, I believe, to Samuel and Timothy Williams. He attends the business of my office during my absence.

"The sheriff of Luzerne has brought down the return of the election of a member to sit in the Convention of this State, for considering of the Federal Constitution. I am chosen. The Convention is to meet the 20th instant. This will keep me here a few weeks. I wish to hear from you and my friends before I go up to Wyoming; or, if you address a letter to Mr. Hodgdon's care, he will forward it, if I should be gone. Should it be perfectly convenient to you, I shall be obliged by a remittance of any sum of money, more or less, as you can spare it. This also may be directed to Mr. Hodgdon's care. After I return to Wyoming, I shall embrace an early opportunity to make, and forward to you, a deed of the land you proposed to take of me. Your letters on the subject are there, the particulars of which I do not fully recollect.

"Give my love to my son, and persuade him to write a short letter to his mamma or me.

"I will write Mr. Williams, if I have time. This I expect

to send by John Blanchard, brother to our cousin ; and I must go to him immediately, lest he should be gone.

“I bid you, dear brother, a most affectionate adieu, and pray you to present my kind love to all my sisters and their children, whom I remember with tenderness ; and Mr. Williams, Mr. Gardner, and Mr. Dodge are not forgotten.

“T. PICKERING.

“JOHN PICKERING, Esq.”

CHAPTER X.

Colonel Pickering in Philadelphia. — An Exile from Wyoming. —
Member of the Convention of Pennsylvania, to act upon the
proposed Constitution of the United States.

1787.

COLONEL PICKERING reached Philadelphia on the 25th of October, as appears by the following letter to his wife : —

“ PHILADELPHIA, October 27th, 1787.

“ MY DEAR BECKEY,

“ Besides the letter I wrote from Luce’s, by John Scott, I again addressed you from Haller’s. I am now happy in the opportunity which presents of writing you by Doctor Smith. Making easy journeys, I did not arrive here till Thursday evening, just before dusk. The same evening I went to see all the children, and found them very well. I wrote you that William was with Sally, at her mother’s, and I find he pleases everybody that sees him. Mr. Doz’s family, Captain Faulkener’s, and Mr. Donnel’s, are contending ‘ which has the best boy.’ Tim, you will remember, is at Mr. Doz’s, Henry at Captain Faulkener’s, Charles at Captain Donnel’s. These good families are severally delighted with their charge. Yesterday afternoon Nancy Cunningham and Charles came to Mr. Doz’s; and I led down Henry, and Sally brought William, that they might all see one another. It was the first general interview since their arrival, and they were much pleased with it. Tim had before been to see Charles, and (says Donnel) ‘ it was a pleasure to see them, at meeting, embrace and kiss each other.’ I have given you this detail, because I know it will give at least as much pleasure to the mother as it does to the father; and their aunt will not be unaffected with so pleasing an account.

“Colonel Denison has made his report to Council, and to-day I was sent for, with Doctor Smith. The Doctor gave a particular history of the transactions in the settlement, from the time that Franklin was taken. I read Mr. Bowman’s letters, Esquire Gore’s, *and some paragraphs of yours*. Upon the whole, I gave my opinion of the measures absolutely necessary for government to take to ensure the execution of the laws. I trust such measures will be pursued; and I hope *within a reasonable time*; for, on every account, public and private, I am impatient to return.

“I have the pleasure to inform you that Dr. Hamilton has been taken with a budget of letters and papers, showing his own and Franklin’s treasonable practices. Hamilton, you perhaps know, wrote three of the letters which were taken with Starkweather, and has been Franklin’s principal correspondent in York State.

“Quiet having been restored to the county of Luzerne by the voluntary dispersion of Franklin’s adherents, the Council have ordered his irons to be knocked off, but he is kept closely confined.

“I am informed that there is a decided majority in the Council and Assembly of Republicans and Federal men, which promises good to the Continent, to the State, and to the county of Luzerne; for the best good that can happen to all is a vigorous, effective, yet safe Republican government. I earnestly hope that a good man, of Federal principles, may be sent to the State Convention from Luzerne. I wish this may be Mr. Bowman.

“I feel sanguine that I shall soon return to you, and that we shall enjoy a quiet winter; which I trust will be less dismal than Betsey predicts. I shall use my endeavors to render it as pleasing as possible to both of you.

“Do not forget the injunctions, in my two last letters, of riding on horseback every good day. It will better or confirm your health, and teach you to ride, which will be indispensably necessary in the country. But remember always that the saddle-girths are buckled tight and your stirrups secure.

“The package, containing coarse cloths and trimmings, was sent off last week for Middletown, to Mr. Fry, and he was

desired to forward it in a boat to Wyoming. I suppose it may come up with Mr. Hollenback's. William George and George can have the necessary clothes made when the package arrives. If they want before that time, perhaps you can make shift with some of my old clothes.

"Mrs. Doz and Mrs. Flowers desire their warmest love to you and Betsey, — mine you have constantly. God bless you both.

"T. PICKERING.

"P. S. Captain Hodgdon has received a present of oranges from the West Indies, and sent three dozen to Mrs. Flowers, for herself and our children. He has given me a dozen to send to you and Betsey, which I shall give to Doctor Smith, if he can carry them."

The following letters from Colonel Pickering to his wife continue the narrative of his personal experience, family affairs, operations on his buildings and farm, and public labors, while remaining in enforced separation from his home.

"PHILADELPHIA, November 15th, 1787.

"The few weeks I have been from you seem like an age. Soon, however, I expect to see you. Some troops are ready to march, and will arrive with, or immediately after, Colonel Denison, who is the bearer of this. The Assembly also are likely, in a few days, to agree in a law to enable the commissioners to proceed in the examination of the Connecticut claims, as well as to enable the Council to raise and establish a permanent military force, to ensure the future peace of the county of Luzerne. I was sadly disappointed that I could not proceed to Wilkesbarre when I was last at Luce's. Probably, however, it was fortunate that I could not; for the Assembly was so irritated with the conduct of the people in that county that they were disposed to repeal or suspend the law for confirming the Connecticut titles. Six in seven of a committee agreed to report to the House a resolution for suspending the law; and it has been with no small difficulty

that they have been induced to adopt different sentiments. At length, however, the committee appear unanimous in favor of a law to prolong the time for examining the claims, and I expect the House will concur. I wish to see the event of the measure before I leave town.

“With the utmost impatience I have been expecting a letter from you ; but I know not of any body’s arrival since George came to town. As he brought no letter, I suppose he came away without leave. I have told him to find a master, but he has not yet succeeded.

“The children are all very well. On the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Peters, Tim is gone to Belmont, to remain there, and go to school with their boys. I went over with Tim. The boys and he were mutually rejoiced at meeting, and the idea of Tim’s remaining there. Captain Faulkener desires me to be perfectly easy about Henry during the winter. He and his wife and Mrs. Lyon are fond of him ; and their new maid is extravagantly so, and Harry of her. Charles, being now well acquainted at Captain Donnel’s, begins to be troublesome, and, when crossed in his wishes, threatens them that he will go back to Wyoming. I never knew Charles so fat and hearty. William has had sore eyes, but they are nearly well. He is yet with Sally, at her mother’s. I have thought of putting him and Charles to board with our old milk-woman. She consents to take them. I went to the house. ’Tis roomy and clever, and her own children looked clean. I am not determined whether to place Sally there with them, or to let her seek a service, as she has expressed a disinclination to return to Wyoming ; though when I last spoke to her she seemed rather willing to go back.

“To-day it begins to rain for the first time (save a small sprinkling) since I left you. I think the springs must now be very low, and if so it will be best for Doctor Sprague to finish digging the well and stone it up. I wish you could get Mr. Hollenback’s and Mr. Carey’s advice on the subject ; and if they approve let the Doctor proceed forthwith to complete it. Enjoin it upon him to dig as low as possible, and stone it well. I suppose there can be nothing for Dean to do, and therefore it will be best to discharge him, if he is not already discharged.

I am glad to find William George so faithful. I wish him not to come down until I return. I shall bring or send up his tools. His wife I have provided for ; she is now comfortably furnished with clothes, with every article she requested, and Mr. Forbes has agreed to board her at five shillings a week. So William may be easy on that score."

" PHILADELPHIA, November 17th, 1787.

" I have received your welcome favor by William George. I am happy to hear that you and Betsey are in health and spirits. Enclosed is a paper of directions about the chimney of the house. If the masons are not gone up the river, let it be carried up without delay. Perhaps what I have said about the arch may not be very clear. My meaning is that, when it is built, one open end of it will be towards the street, and the other towards the well. I wish John Scott to attend to the carrying up the chimney ; and perhaps he and Veal can do the whole of it ; but I leave it to be determined on the spot. Let John particularly see that the mortar is faithfully made, the bricks laid true, and let the joints be all well filled with mortar. Let the inside of every flue be plastered with the clay mortar as smooth as possible. I hope the lime can be got up in time, at least before the chimney gets through the roof. Let the carpenters cover over the hole in the roof, left for the chimney, that the rain may not come through, while the chimney is carrying up. If the weather should be so cold, any night, as to freeze the mortar in the chimney, let the work of the preceding day be covered with boards or something else.

" I will supply all your wants as quick as possible. William talks of returning on Monday or Tuesday next. By him I shall write you again. When the Convention is over, I hope I may return to you in safety. The boys are all well, I have not heard from John. With my tender love to Betsey, I remain, my dear Beckey, ever yours.

" P. S. The plastering inside the chimney should not be laid on too thick. The thicker the more likely to fall off."

These and other letters contain drawings or diagrams, roughly but plainly made by the pen, representing the

positions of the house, the office, the well and oven, in relation to the street or road in front of the house, and to each other, giving the plan of the rooms on each floor of the house, the chimney and its flues, and stating the dimensions of them, severally, in feet and inches.

As has been before remarked, Colonel Pickering possessed an extraordinary capacity for labor, physical and mental. It was not, at any stage of his life, more put to the test than during these few months of his enforced residence in Philadelphia. His engagements and occupations, in reference to personal and private matters were multifarious, — purchasing innumerable articles, for the house and farm, and arranging for their transportation ; visiting his dispersed children ; communicating with those who had kindly assumed the care of some of them, and looking out for the fidelity of persons hired to provide for the comfort of the others ; giving directions to servants going and coming between Philadelphia and Wyoming ; writing frequent and long letters to his wife, parts of which have now been presented, embracing such exact and minute details of advice and suggestion, as were evidently the result of much thought and deliberation ; negotiating with his brother in Salem for the sale of what remained of his patrimony ; settling outstanding accounts connected with his mercantile operations ; raising the means of meeting the unexpected expenses into which his Wyoming affairs and experiences had drawn him ; giving information in all directions, in answer to correspondents, as to matters growing out of the business of the Quartermaster's department in the Revolutionary war ; executing commissions for neighbors at Wyoming ; and, in compliance with solicita-

tions of personal friends, communicating in writing and at length his views on agricultural, educational, and political subjects. His public cares and duties, at this time, were of the gravest and most important kind. For many weeks he was constantly in his seat, as a member of the Pennsylvania Convention, to consider and determine for that State on the Constitution of the United States. He bore his part in the momentous discussions. All who knew him are sure that, in private debates, his great conversational powers were effectually exerted in promotion of the grand result.

But the object for which his labors were most unwearied, was to prevail upon the government of Pennsylvania to adopt a decisive, wise, and steady policy, as to the condition and welfare of his own immediate constituency, the people of Luzerne county. For this end he argued before committees of the Assembly and Council, and used all possible and legitimate efforts in conferences with leading men.

The government of the State was much embarrassed in dealing with the affairs of Wyoming. Its proceedings were strangely inconstant and dilatory. The elements that operated to paralyze its deliberations, and baffle its measures, mentioned in the preceding chapter, although quite inexplicable at the time, may now be brought to light, and may be more specifically stated. On the promulgation of the decree at Trenton, at the close of 1782, it seems to have been the sentiment of considerate and uninterested persons that a lenient course was proper; and a law was finally enacted, quieting and confirming the land titles of the inhabitants given by Connecticut prior to the decree. But intrigues and

movements were immediately commenced to procure its repeal. An active and earnest party,—consisting of those capitalists and speculators, who, in one of the intervals of the long contest when the Connecticut settlers had been driven off by Pennsylvania, had purchased the lands from that State; or who had bought, long before, of the Penns,—of course would never rest until the Connecticut titles, originally conveying them to others, were wholly repudiated. Although small in number, this party was indefatigable in its efforts to have the law confirming the Connecticut titles repealed. Pennsylvania, through the original proprietary family, or subsequently, had sold to them the lands; and they demanded that the government should restore them, and make its own act good. They stood upon the plighted faith of their own State. It was the apprehension that these men would succeed in their efforts, that raised and kept alive the insurrectionary spirit in Wyoming; and it was not to be questioned that, rather than relinquish their estates, the Connecticut settlers would rush into rebellion.

This state of things brought and kept in operation, from another quarter, a powerful influence in aid of those urging the repeal of the confirming law; proceeding from persons in Connecticut, New York, and elsewhere, whose schemes of speculation and ambitious aspirations led them to long for the separation of the Wyoming territory into an independent State, which could only be accomplished by a successful rebellion against Pennsylvania.

These two parties, the one inside, the other outside, of the State; the one open and bold, the other concealed and cunning,—had combined in trying to prevent the pas-

sage, in any form, of a confirming law, and were now doing their utmost to have it repealed. They each eagerly sought to inflame the resentment of the people and government of Pennsylvania against the old settlers of Wyoming for their insubordinate and insurrectionary proceedings, particularly the mob violence that had compelled the commissioners to seek safety in flight from the territory. They so far succeeded as to prevent either conciliatory or effective measures. That part of the State was left under uncertain fortunes, without security for property, and a prey to internal convulsions. Allowing things thus to remain, the government of Pennsylvania incurred just reproach, and inflicted great injury upon the State. The beautiful country on the upper branches of the Susquehanna was the point to which emigration from the eastern and other States had tended; but the tide was turned elsewhere, to securer although more distant regions, beyond the mountains and above the Ohio.

The following letters from Colonel Pickering to his wife show the course of things in the Assembly, and bring us back again, for a while, from his public to his private life, — to domestic interests, and the cares with which he was occupied for the welfare of his home and family.

“PHILADELPHIA, November 29th, 1787.

“MY DEAR BECKEY,

“The Assembly have adjourned to the third Tuesday in February next, and postponed till then the consideration of the affairs of Wyoming. I am very sorry, because it keeps us all in suspense. However, they were in such ill humor, that I think the postponement better than a present determination. I think, when they meet again, they will do what is right. In the mean time, it will behove the people to conduct themselves with perfect good order.

“ I detained William George, until I should know the fate of the bill before the House about Wyoming; and now William desires to stay till Sunday next. Captain Schott I expect will set off to-morrow. Mr. Hodgdon, at my request, has forwarded a barrel of sugar, a barrel of rum, a box of chocolate, and two boxes of glass to Nazareth, with sundry other articles, which I would have my wagon come out for immediately. If George Crum can put one or two of his horses, with two or three of mine, to the wagon, and come for the goods, I should be glad. He will meet William George, who shall turn back (if he should be beyond Nazareth), and assist him. The articles at Nazareth will not make a load; so the wagon can take in more at Haller's; but it will be best to take (in the whole) but a moderate load. I was going to propose John Scott's going with the wagon; but you cannot spare him. The goods at Nazareth are lodged at William Henry's, to whom I shall write by William to deliver them.

“ Tim is at Mr. Peters's and very happy. I have got him a new suit of clothes. Henry is at Captain Faulkener's, where he is much beloved. Captain Faulkener desired me to make myself easy about Harry for the winter. He also has a new suit. I have sent Sally, with Charles and William, to our milk-woman's at three dollars a week for all three. William's eyes are sore; otherwise he is very well. Charles is fatter and apparently healthier than I ever knew him to be. Mrs. Donnell thinks him the handsomest of all the boys.

“ Mrs. Hastings desires to be remembered to you and Betsey; so do all your friends.

“ Captain Schott will give you the particulars of the proceedings of the Assembly. I cannot tell when the Convention will rise, but not under ten days or a fortnight, as I should guess. I am impatient for Colonel Denison's return, to know the state of Wyoming. Tender my kind love to Betsey and my compliments to Mr. Bowman. With heartfelt affection I remain, my dear Beckey, ever yours.

P. S. I have desired Mr. Burkett to purchase a wig for Esquire Gore: but he has not yet found one ready made; and the peruke-makers ask eight dollars to make one.”

“ PHILADELPHIA, November 30th, 1787.

“ Captain Schott not setting out this morning, I have time to write again, and the means of sending you some money. I enclose three bank-notes of five dollars each, for which I presume Mr. Hollenback will give you the cash. This, with what else I send by William George, will enable you to procure beef and pork for the family. I hope some of the people, who owe me grain, will bring it in. Doctor Smith's son, James, owes me twelve bushels of good merchantable wheat, and three-fifths of a bushel, being sixty-three shillings, — the price of three and a half bushels of salt, at eighteen shillings; he also had the salt barrel, which he is to return with the wheat. If he has not delivered it, mention it to the Doctor, and beg him to send a message to his son to bring it. If you or Betsey look over my small-account books, and the papers in Mr. Ochmigh's hand-writing, containing the names of the persons who have had goods of me, you will find what is due. Mr. Hollenback can tell where they live, and John Scott can go to all that are within ten miles. Some of them should be called on without delay, lest they slip away.

“ I believe I forgot to write about my rails. John Scott knows where they are. I think they had better be piled one above another so high as that we may discover them above the snow; and then they can be hauled, during the winter, wherever I choose to carry them. Wickheyser and his son can pile them, if my own help cannot be spared. It should be done before they get covered with snow.

“ If my plough is not already housed, let it be done immediately.

“ If Crum comes out for the glass, &c., direct him to shake the boxes before he loads them, to see if the glass has got loose. If it rattles, it ought to be opened and repacked. John Scott can glaze the sashes; but I wish him to do it as well as he can, so that the putty may be smooth, and not project over the glass beyond the wood of the sash.

“ I hope the partitions of the rooms are up, — rough boards lapped, as it is to be lathed and plastered upon. If Mr. Hollenback is pressing for his house to himself, will it be possible for you to live in the office till our own house is habitable?

Mr. Bowinan, in that case, can probably have a bed in Mat. Hollenback's house. I do not expect the wash-house will be built till the spring; therefore, it will be necessary to have an oven built in the yard, thirty or forty feet from the house, with the mouth of it to the southward.

"A Mr. Drake, of Kingston, told me last summer that he should have a thousand weight of pork to sell this fall. You can send to him to know his price. As you will have the cash, you will be able to get meat at the lowest rate. Lord Butler told me that he should have a fat ox for sale. But the beef for salting should be the fattest that is to be had. If you have a good chance of buying beef or pork cheap, and have not cash enough, I will bring or send you enough to fulfil your engagements.

"My eyes have been somewhat sore; otherwise I never enjoyed better health. Mr. Doz remains very infirm. His wife and Mrs. Flowers are well. I lodge at Mr. Doz's.

"What bricks remain should be housed. I think they had best be put in the cellar of the new house. If those which are slack-burnt remain in the weather, the frost will moulder them to pieces. All the boards and pieces of boards should be collected and piled up to prevent waste. All the shingles should also be regularly piled.

"It gives me pain, my dear, to trouble you with business of this kind; but, if it has not your attention, I am afraid it will be neglected. I hope you will, ere long, be relieved from such burthens, and never have occasion to encounter so many difficulties again. God grant that hereafter we may live in tranquillity, and that our only solicitude will be, not to throw burthens on each other, but how we may best enjoy the bounties of Providence.

"Charles has had a great deal to say about 'Little Edward.' I have even forgot his countenance. Betsey ever has a place in my affectionate remembrance. I long to greet you both. God preserve you!

P. S. December 5th.—Captain Schott went off about fifteen minutes before I reached his lodging, which I much regret. The bank-notes mentioned in this letter are in the enclosed letter. I shall, besides, give William George two half joes

for your use, and money for his expenses and those of the wagon, which I hope will meet him at Nazareth.

"Captain Faulkener and wife and Mrs. Lyon (some of the best and kindest folks in the world) send their love to you and Betsey. They are all much pleased with Harry, who also sends his love to his mamma and aunt."

The next day, December 6th, his man, William George, not having started, he wrote again to his wife, directing her to draw upon Mr. Hollenback for such money as she might need. He says: —

"The Convention is still sitting, but, I think, will rise next week. I have not yet determined about my returning. I hope to hear from you by Colonel Denison.

"Captain Henry Williams (George's brother) is here from St. Eustatia. He has given me a fine pine-apple for you, which William George is to carry with him. I have also given William money to buy three pounds of tea for you. I intend to get coffee and some other articles, and forward to Nazareth, to go up with the other articles now there."

On the 20th of December he wrote as follows: —

"MY DEAR BECKEY,

"I have waited, with the greatest impatience, to hear from you. Not a syllable have I received since the arrival of Lord Butler, now five weeks ago. This morning, Mr. Avery called at Mr. Doz's, but without a letter from anybody. 'Tis a satisfaction, however, to learn by him that you and Betsey and the child were well last week. By him also I find that Crum, with the wagon, and William George, were as near Wyoming as the top of the mountain when Avery passed them. I am sorry the chimney of the house was not finished; I fear the frost may injure it. I hope the house will be habitable as soon as the sashes are glazed. Those of the lower room and kitchen had best be done first.

"The roots in the cellar of our house should be looked after, and covered with shavings to keep them from the frost, until the chimney shall be done, and fires made in it daily to

warm the house. But let all possible care be taken of fire and candles, lest the house should be set on fire. I presume the cellar windows have been stopped up to keep out the frost, and that the outer cellar door has been made and put up.

“The children are all well, except as to the eyes of Charles and William. William’s, indeed, are nearly well, and Charles’s not bad. Tim is just now in town. I brought him over last Tuesday to see his brothers, and I expect to go back with him to-day to Mr. Peters’s. He is kindly treated there, and well liked. He appeared perfectly at home. Harry is as happy as a child could be at Captain Faulkener’s.

“I hoped to have had letters from you, and to have seen Colonel Denison, that I might have known better how to have conducted myself. May I go to you? Or must I yet remain here? I am extremely anxious to have these questions resolved. However, according to William George’s information, I may expect the arrival of George Geary and Dolly by Christmas, when I shall learn my fate. Adieu, my dear Bekey.”

A few extracts from his letters to other correspondents will show his feelings, from time to time, in reference to proceedings of the Convention for considering and acting upon the Constitution of the United States. Writing to his brother, November 29th, 1787, he says: “The Convention of this State is now sitting. I am the member for Luzerne County. The Federal Constitution will be adopted by a great majority. The Antifederalists have got only about twenty-two votes out of sixty-nine, on some subordinate questions; and some of these, I have no doubt, will join the Federalists on the great question of ratification.” In a letter to his nephew, John Gardner, of December 11th, he says: “The question will probably be taken to-morrow, and by a very great majority the Constitution will be adopted. Delaware State made

short work. Their Convention assembled on a Monday, and on the following Thursday (last week) *unanimously* adopted it. We have a number of opposers, but they evidently oppose from interested and from party views."

The vote, as he expected, was taken the next day, on the 12th of December.

A letter to his brother, dated at Philadelphia, December 29th, 1787, gives his views as to the state of parties as developed in Pennsylvania, on the question of ratification, and of the interests that entered into the question in New York : —

"You will have seen by the newspapers that the Delaware and Jersey States have *unanimously* adopted the new Federal Constitution. Pennsylvania, by a majority of forty-six to twenty-three. The Convention consisted of sixty-nine members. The *minority* were of that party in this State who are called *Constitutionalists*; from which party *alone* all the opposition has proceeded; but many of the wisest and best Constitutionalists have, on this occasion, joined the *Republicans* in this State, who, to a man, are *Federalists*.

"Much opposition is expected in New York. That State has long been acting a disingenuous part. They refused the impost to Congress, because half of New Jersey, a great part of Connecticut, the western part of Massachusetts and Vermont, received their imported goods through New York, who put into her *own* treasury all the duties arising on the goods consumed in the States above enumerated; and the same selfish spirit seems still to actuate too many in that State. But the Federalists in it appear pretty confident that the new Constitution will be adopted, though not without a severe struggle. We here entertain no doubt of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. One thing I will say, because, so far as my knowledge and information reach, it is true, that the most enlightened and the worthiest characters are patrons of the new Constitution."

A postscript to this letter is as follows : —

“January 1, 1788. — At the request of the Council I have delayed my journey till now, to take some orders for Wyoming. Yesterday I received by Mr. Hodgdon your bills on Joseph Shoemaker and Manly and Gallagher. I hope my draught in favor of Mrs. Hastings will not be inconvenient to you. *I will draw no more.* I sincerely wish you a happy new year. I am just going to set off. Adieu. — T. PICKERING.”

He went by the Wind-gap route. Mr. Hodgdon, writing from Philadelphia, January 12th, says : —

“By Mr. Haller, who is to be the bearer of this letter, I am informed of the time you left his house to proceed to Wyoming ; by which I with pleasure observe that no accounts on the road had operated to prevent your design of going immediately in. I hope all yet remains quiet, and that, with pleasing prospects, you are enjoying domestic happiness. The children here are all in perfect health, and are entirely freed from the complaint they labored under before you left them.”

He crossed the mountains and reached Wyoming in safety. From the expression in the letter, above quoted, it is evident that Hodgdon had apprehensions that the Colonel might possibly meet with threats of molestation on the way. Indeed, great fears were entertained by his friends in Philadelphia that he would experience a renewal of the outrages that had driven him from the country the fall before.

It is a singular fact that his wife continued to the last to dissuade him from returning to Wyoming without being accompanied by an armed force to protect him. Great as was the burden of care thrown on her by his absence, and much as her heart yearned for his presence, with a strange foresight, a sort of intuitive dis-

cernment of the state of things, she warned him of the dangers that awaited him. It will be remembered that he interpreted his election to the Convention, subsequent to his escape from Wyoming in October, as proof that there was a change in the feelings of the people, and that it was safe to return. She saw it in a different light. They suffered, perhaps promoted, his election, with a view to ulterior plans. It was getting him out of the county while the Convention was in session, and, so far as it increased his importance and influence, would aid their purpose, which was, if Franklin was not released, to seize his person, hold him as a hostage, subject him to the same treatment Franklin was receiving, or might receive, and thus compel the government of Pennsylvania to come to their terms. This design Mrs. Pickering penetrated. In a letter, dated November 8th, she begged her husband not to be deceived by his election to the Convention, and expressed her conviction that Franklin's supporters were resolved upon getting him into their possession, and thus saving their leader from punishment and securing his release. Events proved her wisdom.

But, before pursuing the story of Colonel Pickering's Wyoming experience, it is proper to put on record two documents written by him during his compulsory separation from his family and residence in Philadelphia, from the middle of October to the end of the year 1787. When the cares, labors, and anxieties with which that period was crowded are considered, it is wonderful that he could have found time or opportunity to compose them. One was a public letter to the Pennsylvania House of Assembly, through their Speaker, relating to

Wyoming affairs; the other a letter, urging the adoption of the Federal Constitution, addressed to a personal friend and military associate, Major Charles Tillinghast. They are each worthy of being permanently associated with the memory of Colonel Pickering, and of the chapter in his biography now to be assigned them.

The latter particularly is of permanent and general value. It alludes in several passages to the want of time to do full justice to the great and momentous subject, and was written with a running pen. But perhaps, nowhere can a better picture be found of the assaults made at the time upon the proposed Constitution of the United States. It is enlivened, as his writings often were, by a free conversational style, and has great force and directness of statement. Both these papers bear that impress of sound common sense, clearness of expression, simplicity of diction, and manly courage, which made their author one of the most effective political public writers of his day.

CHAPTER XI.

Letter to the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania. — Argument in Favor of Adopting the Constitution of the United States.

1787.

COLONEL PICKERING felt sure that it was required by every sentiment of humanity and every principle of justice, — absolutely necessary to give peace to the district of Wyoming and the State of Pennsylvania, — that the confirming act should be restored, and rendered sure and perpetual. To this he was pledged. For this he labored; and, at a moment when the counter interests seemed to be prevailing, he addressed the following public letter to the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania: —

“Thursday evening, November 22d, 1787.

“SIR,

“Deeply impressed with a sense of the mischievous consequences of the material alteration of the law relating to the Wyoming lands, which will be effected by the clause just adopted by your Honorable House, I beg leave to state some facts which appear to me important, and which, perhaps, may induce a reconsideration of it. The part I have taken in this business, the safety of myself and family which depends on the issue of it, and weighty public considerations, compel me to enter on the subject, and I pray for the indulgent attention of the House.

“After the law had been enacted for creating the northern part of Northumberland into a separate county, by the name of Luzerne (a measure of which, till then, I was wholly ignorant), it was proposed to me to apply for the office of Prothonotary for the new county. I objected; but it was urged upon me, chiefly on this ground, — that the views of government

being conciliatory, my particular situation would enable me, more than any other probable candidate for that office, to promote them. I yielded to these solicitations, and applied for that office and the others usually joined with it in new and thinly peopled counties.

“Afterwards, the Assembly having passed a law to enable the electors of Luzerne to choose a Councillor, Representative, Sheriff, and other county officers, and therein authorized me singly, or in conjunction with the other persons therein named, to conduct those elections, I went thither with the law, and during the space of three weeks was unremitting in my endeavors to persuade the people to make their elections, and peaceably submit to the government of this State. With extreme difficulty I prevailed. The Councillor took his seat; but the Representative, John Franklin, having other views, remained at home; and, by his artifices and misrepresentations, seduced a considerable number of the people from their duty; so that, on my return to that county, in April, I had to repeat my labors; but again I succeeded, and the elections of the justices were ultimately held, with the very general approbation of the inhabitants.

“Immediately after the first elections, in February, I consulted some of the principal persons who had attended the elections, and who had been old settlers, and, as I supposed, were best acquainted with the claims and expectations of the people. Those claims and expectations the petition which has been read this evening was intended to describe; and the law for confirming the lands so claimed, was grounded on this petition; and such words or passages as were inserted into the law, to extend the confirming clause beyond the limits of the Committee’s report, I trust I may be permitted to say, were not “insidiously” introduced. I did not conceal a single fact or motive from the Committee. The principle of public policy which led to the adoption of the bill, was that of securing the submission and future attachment of that great majority of the Connecticut settlers within the county of Luzerne who had equitable pretensions to lands granted them prior to the Trenton decree; and, to effect that, it appeared expedient to extend the confirmation beyond the

occupied rights ; but, so far was I from wishing or attempting to conceal that extension, I well remember to have told one honorable member, who supported the bill, and who is also in the present house, that it might perhaps comprehend one hundred such unoccupied rights. The case of the claimants of such rights, as originally stated to me, struck me very forcibly. In all my communications with that people before the first election I held up no ideas of confirmation beyond the rights they had occupied before the Trenton decree ; but the gentlemen there, whom I afterwards consulted, represented that, besides such occupants, there was a considerable number of persons who, or those whom they represented, were actual settlers there prior to the said decree, but who had not taken actual possession of their rights before the passing of the said decree. These persons, they said, were obliged, during the late war, to live with their friends in the compact part of the settlement, for their safety and protection against the Indians ; that they had suffered and bled, in common with the other settlers, in the defence of that frontier ; and that it would be singularly distressing to reduce them or their orphan children to beggary, merely because their lots had fallen to them in places remote from the heart of the settlement. I need not be ashamed to own that humanity, as well as considerations of equity and public policy, prompted me to wish such sufferers might be provided for ; and to such the petition specially referred. These sufferers, Sir, I yet hope may experience the commiseration and favorable regard of your Honorable House.

“ There are, Sir, other circumstances respecting the Connecticut claimants which seem necessary to be made known before the bill now pending is passed into a law.

“ The first township granted by the Susquehanna Company, called Kingston, was to be divided into forty-three parts, each of which, as the township was five miles square, would contain about three hundred and seventy-two acres, without any allowance for roads.

“ Another township, called Hanover, was to be divided, agreeably to the latest resolution of the Susquehanna Company that I have seen, into thirty-six parts ; and I think

there is one other township which was also granted to about six and thirty settlers. The other townships, as well as I recollect, were to be divided into fifty-three parts, which gives about three hundred acres to each right. In each of them, three rights were to be reserved; one for the first settled minister in office, one for a parsonage, and one for the support of a town-school. The manner of dividing the townships has been various. In some, they made as many as four several divisions. In Wilkesbarre, for instance, each settler had a meadow lot (being part of the flats) of about thirty acres. A town lot of three acres and a half, or three acres and three-quarters, a back lot of about two hundred and fifty acres, and a fourth lot containing five acres, and the land reserved for the three public uses aforementioned was left in one entire body. In some townships those three public rights were drawn in several lots; and in other townships, some parcels of land have been reserved to accommodate a mill, or for other uses of common benefit to the inhabitants. Now whatever lands shall be confirmed, it seems necessary to advert to these circumstances to prevent the confusion and mischief which a departure from the usages of the people might produce. The surveys of townships, which have been made by order of the Commissioners, have been conformed to those usages.

“I would here beg leave to mention the alteration lately made in the lower line of the county of Luzerne. In the first law, it was declared that it should run west from the mouth of Nescopeck Creek. In the supplement to that law, it was declared that it should run ‘northwestwardly’ from the mouth of Nescopeck; and in the law passed on the — day of September last, the word ‘northwestwardly’ was interpreted to mean ‘north, one degree west.’ Sir, I am well informed that this last line will never strike the ridge dividing the waters of the east and west branches of the Susquehanna. I am also informed that it will cut off one-half, and perhaps the whole, of the township of Huntington, which is one of the seventeen townships mentioned in the petition, and in which there are sundry Connecticut settlers, who occupied and improved

their lots long before the Trenton decree. A number of them have already presented, and regularly supported, their claims.

"I would here cease, Sir, to trouble the House with any further observations, had I not reason to believe that pains have been taken to lessen the weight of any applications I should make in this business, by false suggestions of their proceeding solely from interested motives. Permit me, Sir, to declare that I claim no lands under a Connecticut title, except those mentioned in the enclosed paper; that I cannot acquire a single acre by extending the confirmation beyond the rights actually occupied prior to the decree of Trenton; all the lands I purchased being parts of very old settlers' rights; and that I can lose nothing from the lessening of the original grant by the clause just adopted, unless by that restriction numbers of the inhabitants who will lose their expected rights should murmur, and a general jealousy and discontent be excited from an apprehension that this step is only a prelude to the total repeal of the law, — which, indeed, to stir up the people to rebellion, Franklin has been continually predicting. Such general discontent, should it arise, would oblige me to remove my family, and abandon the country for ever.

"I am, Sir, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"THE HONORABLE THE SPEAKER OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY."

The following accompanied the letter to the Speaker:

"Lands purchased by Timothy Pickering, within the county of Luzerne, under Connecticut titles, the whole lying within the town of Wilkesbarre: —

	£	s.
2 town lots of Colonel Butler, fenced, containing $17\frac{1}{2}$ acres	37	10
1 town lot of M. Hollenback, Esq., agent of Benjamin Clarke, not fenced, $3\frac{1}{2}$ and	15	0
1 meadow lot of 30 acres, and 8 acres adjoining, of Asa Bennet	90	0
$\frac{1}{2}$ of a meadow lot, of 15 acres, $\frac{1}{2}$ of a back lot of about 135 acres, and 1 five-acre lot	65	0
1 back lot of Jabez Fish and John Corkin 250 acres	78	15
1 back lot of Capt. Schott, 250 acres	80	0
Total acres, 704 $\frac{1}{2}$."	£386	5

The foregoing letter, besides being a specimen of Colonel Pickering's plain, clear, and forcible style, is particularly interesting from its date and the circumstances in which it was written. While in bold and earnest language he was thus pleading for the people of Wyoming, he was suffering exile at their hands. An infuriated mob had surrounded and sacked his dwelling, and he had barely escaped from their blind wrath. But he knew that humanity and equity demanded that the government of Pennsylvania should be actuated by a more considerate policy towards them; and no sentiments of resentment for personal wrongs and hardships were suffered to abate his efforts in their behalf.

The impression made by Colonel Pickering upon his associates led them to seek his counsel and avail themselves of his views on important subjects. This has been spoken of in reference to some matters already related. The statement may be extended, with a more general application, throughout his long life. His correspondence shows that he was thus constantly called upon. The extraordinary clearness, accuracy, and force of his faculties, exhibited in all that fell from his lips or flowed from his pen, naturally turned men to him; while the integrity of his sentiments and thoughts inspired them with confidence in his statements and reasonings, and a full appreciation of their value. Among his papers are found careful and elaborate discussions, thus elicited, of almost all the questions that commanded special interest in his day. The innumerable letters that passed between him and Washington, during the entire military and civil administration of the latter, illustrate this estimation of his intelligence and upright judgment. His reply to Washington's request for his

views as to a peace military establishment, such as might be required and be consistent with our other institutions referred to in the previous volume, is a most thoroughly considered document. In it he suggested and advocated the establishment of a military academy at West Point. The experience of the past has justified, as that of the future probably will, the views there presented.* So also, in reference to the public policy pursued in the formation of governments in the north-western territory, his letters to Rufus King, Elbridge Gerry, and others, in response to questions propounded by them, are elaborate disquisitions exhausting the subject. They discuss at length the organizing into civilized States the vast regions then covered by a wilderness, the best methods for securing to them a solid foundation in universal education and universal freedom, and the wise construction of institutions of law, for the preservation of popular rights, social order, and permanent prosperity. He did not shrink from the sacrifice of time and the labor involved in studying, and presenting in a carefully digested form, all questions presented in this way to his attention. The results are not so much in printed works, laid before the public eye, as in private letters to individuals in answer to inquiries, but often rising to the character and dimensions of treatises. His voluminous correspondence on political, agricultural, theological, and educational topics, comprises a vast amount of instructive considerations, perspicuous arguments, and useful practical observations. Few men have had occasion to write so much, and few have written better.

The following letter, addressed to him by a gentle-

* Appendix A.

man who had been one of his Deputy Quartermasters, shows how men sought and valued his advice : —

“ NEW YORK, November 24th, 1787.

“ SIR,

“ Presuming on the many proofs of friendship and confidence with which you have been pleased to honor me, I have taken the liberty to enclose a pamphlet, lately published here, on the Constitution proposed by the late Convention ; from an attentive reading of which, and a serious examination of the Constitution itself, I cannot but consider it as very dangerous to the liberties of the people of this Continent. I do not consider myself competent to a perfect knowledge of the more intricate parts of government, but as I conceive the one in question to be deficient in the grand essentials requisite to the security of those rights for which we have so ably and successfully contended with Great Britain, I have concluded, and I hope not impertinently, to ask your sentiments on this momentous business.

“ If I am wrong in making this request, permit me to plead the indulgence you have always generously given me, in permitting me freely to write and speak my sentiments on every subject ; and, as I have the utmost confidence in your disinterestedness in matters of a public as well as of a private nature, and that you never had, nor do I believe you ever will have, any views inconsistent with what you consider to be the true interest of the States, your opinion, if you are so obliging as to give it, I shall receive with the greatest pleasure ; and, as I have the greatest confidence in your judgment, it will enable me to view the government proposal in its true light.

“ I have the honor to be, Sir, with sentiments of the greatest respect and esteem, your most obedient servant,

“ CHARLES TILLINGHAST.”

Among the manuscripts of Colonel Pickering is a rough-draft of his reply to the foregoing letter. It disposes, in concise language, of the arguments adduced by the “ Federal Farmer,” the title assumed by the author

of the publication submitted to his examination, and vindicates the proposed Constitution at all points. It is given entire, as follows : —

“ PHILADELPHIA, December 24th, 1787.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of November 24th, and, in compliance with your request, promised to write particularly my sentiments on the proposed Constitution for the United States ; but I expected my letter might be abridged or superseded by a publication of the debates in the Convention of Pennsylvania, in which Mr. Wilson gave a satisfactory explanation of the plan, and convincing reasons for its adoption. This publication, however, I find will be delayed, by reason of the great length of the debates. I will, therefore, consider the subject, so far as my leisure will permit ; and as I know you possess great candor, and seek for truth above all things, I shall write with pleasure. And if reasons can be offered which prove that the Constitution will not endanger, but, on the contrary, be the means of preserving the liberties of our country, I am sure you will give it your zealous support.

“ As your fears have been excited, principally by the pamphlet you sent me, I will examine the chief parts of it ; and if I can show that the writer is chargeable with sophistry, with a want of candor, and with designed misrepresentations, you will give him up, as one who, under pretence of securing the freedom of the people, has very different objects in view ; and, though these may not be very obvious, yet we may be sure they exist, for *honest* intentions will put on no *disguise*.

“ I may first notice the art of the writer in assuming the title of the ‘ *Federal Farmer*,’ and professing his ‘ *Federal*’ attachments, to prepossess his Federal readers with an opinion that he really wishes to have established a good Federal government for the States ; but, Sir, I think it will appear that he is a *wolf* in *sheep’s* clothing.

“ His next attempt is to prejudice his readers against the Constitution, by exciting suspicions of the eminent characters by whom it was framed ; suggesting that the leading

men in the Convention were of aristocratic principles, and seized the opportunity of laying the foundation of one general aristocratic government of the United States, and, at the same time, affecting deeply to lament the non-attendance of a few members, whose presence and influence would have prevented it. Who those non-attending members were I know not: probably some were necessarily absent; others perhaps, from too great an indifference about the important interests of their country, and whose absence, therefore, is not a subject for lamentation. At all events, it must be admitted that the attending members were fully competent to the task of forming a plan of government for the United States; and if we examine the characters of those who concurred in its adoption, we shall be satisfied that they aimed at forming a good one, the best indeed that could be agreed on.

“Before I proceed to the plan itself, let me mark another artifice of the ‘Federal Farmer,’ and other opponents of the new Constitution, in raising a cry about *aristocracy*, as being (what it really is) the most oppressive kind of government, and perpetually suggesting that the General Convention and the advocates of the Constitution designed and wish to introduce and establish that very government. But, my dear Sir, be not alarmed with empty sounds. In the proposed Constitution there is no foundation for an aristocracy; for its officers (including in this term as well the legislative as the executive branches) do not hold their places by *hereditary* right, nor *for life*, nor by electing *one another*; neither is any portion of wealth or property a necessary qualification. If a man has virtue and abilities, though not worth a shilling, he may be the President of the United States. *Does this savor of aristocracy?* On the contrary, does it not manifest the marked regard of the Convention to the equal rights of the people, without suffering mere wealth to hold the smallest pre-eminence over poverty attended with virtue and abilities? It deserves indeed particular notice that, while several of the State Constitutions prescribe certain degrees of property, as indispensable qualifications for office, this, which is proposed for the United States, throws the door wide open for the entrance

of *every* man who enjoys the confidence of his fellow-citizens. We should also observe that titles of nobility, a great stimulus to ambition, and the most odious, as well as most dangerous, distinction between the members of a community, are pointedly excluded from this system. If great *hereditary estates*, the foundation of *nobility*, are suffered to continue, or to be created by entails, it will be the fault of the individual States, and not of the general government of the Union. The laws of most, if not all of the States, admit the distribution of the property of a deceased citizen among all his children; and *no entails* ought to be permitted. And, when all existing entails shall be broken, and future ones forbidden, we may make ourselves easy about aristocratic ambition. Great accumulations of wealth will then be rare, of short continuance, and consequently never dangerous.

“The ‘Federal Farmer’ describes three different forms of free government, under either of which he says the United States may exist as a nation. The first is that which is at present established by the Articles of Confederation. The second is a government which might be grounded on the annihilation of the State governments, and a perfect union and consolidation of all the States under one entire government. The third will consolidate the States for certain national objects, and leave them severally distinct, independent republics as to internal policy generally. This last is the form of government he would choose; and ’tis the last which has been chosen and recommended to the people by the General Convention.

“The only difference, then, between them should arise about the distribution of powers, to be vested in the general government and the governments of the several States. On this point we may expect men will differ. The General Convention acknowledged the difficulty of drawing, with precision, the line between those rights which must be surrendered, and those which may be reserved.

“Let us now view their plan, and, after a dispassionate consideration of it, seriously ask ourselves, whether a better distribution of powers could be made? whether any are assigned to the national government which do not embrace national objects? and whether, with less power, the general

government can preserve the Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity ?

“ I shall not spend time in descanting on one entire government for the United States, which would abolish all the State governments ; for, as such a government is not in contemplation, we have nothing to do with it. I will only remark that, as 'tis admitted by all to be a form of government unsafe for a country as extensive as ours, the ‘ Federal Farmer ’ and other opposers of the Constitution endeavor, by their bold but unwarrantable assertions to persuade their readers, not only that it will issue in such an entire government, but that its framers ‘ proposed the partial consolidation, with a view to collect all powers in the United States, ultimately, into one entire government.’ This, indeed, is an extraordinary conclusion. The ‘ Federal Farmer ’ admits the necessity of the ‘ partial consolidation,’ as the only plan of government which can secure the freedom and happiness of this people ; and yet, when the Convention have proposed a *partial* consolidation, he says they evidently designed thereby to effect ultimately an *entire* consolidation !

“ In respect to the organization of the general government, the ‘ Federal Farmer,’ as well as other opposers, object to the smallness of the representation of the people in the House of Representatives ; and uniformly reason upon the supposition that it will never consist of more than sixty-five members, which is the number it is to be composed of, only until the actual enumeration of the people shall have been made. As soon as that shall be effected, the House of Representatives, reckoning one member for every thirty thousand of the people, will consist, probably, of at least one hundred members, and, in twenty-five years more, of two hundred members, and, in half a century, it would consist of four hundred members. It is true, the Congress will possess a power of limiting the number of Representatives, so that they shall never *exceed* one for every thirty thousand, and they may be less. This power of regulating and limiting the number of Representatives is properly vested in Congress. Otherwise, that House would,

in a century, become a most unwieldy body, and as very a mob as the British House of Commons. Such a power of regulating the number of the Representatives in the legislature is not a novelty. In Pennsylvania, where the proposed Constitution has been so violently opposed, there is vested in the legislature a similar power.

“The capital error of all these objectors, and which reduces all their reasoning to mere sophistry, is their assuming for granted that our *Federal* rulers will *necessarily have interests separate from those of the people*, and exercise the powers of government not only *arbitrarily* but *wantonly*. But, Sir, on what do they ground such wild surmises? Why, they tell you that Congress will have power to regulate the elections of Senators and Representatives, and that, possessing this power, they will exercise it to deprive the people of the freedom of election. The ‘Federal Farmer’ says, ‘The general legislature *may* so regulate elections, as to secure the choice of any particular description of men; it may make the whole State one district; make the capital, or any places in the State, the place or places of election,’ and so forth, in the same chimerical strain. But does he, does any man of common sense, really believe that the Congress will ever be guilty of so wanton an exercise of power? Will the immediate Representatives of the people, in Congress, ever consent to so oppressive a regulation? For whose benefit would they do it? Would not the first attempt certainly exclude themselves? And would not the State legislatures, at their next election of Senators, as certainly reject every one who should give his assent to such a law? and if the President did not firmly give his qualified negative to it, would he ever again be placed in the chair of government? What other oppressive regulation can they make, which will not immediately, or in a short time, affect *them* in common with their fellow-citizens? What, then, have we to fear on this head? But will no advantage arise from the *controlling* power of Congress? Yes, certainly. I say a *controlling*, because a candid interpretation of that section in the Constitution will show that it is intended and expected, that the times, places, and modes of electing Senators and Representatives should be

regulated by the State legislatures ; but that, if any particular State government should be refractory, and, in the pride of sovereignty, or influenced by any other motive, should either make no such regulations or improper ones, then the Congress will have power to make such regulations as will ensure to the *people* their rights of election and establish a *uniformity in the mode of constituting the members of the Senate and House of Representatives*. If we give a loose to our imaginations, we may suppose that the State governments *may* abuse their power, and regulate these elections in such manner as would be highly inconvenient to the people, and injurious to the common interests of the States. And, if such abuses should be attempted, will not the *people* rejoice that Congress have a *constitutional* power of correcting them?

“ The next objection is made to the Constitution of the Senate, where the smallest State, as ‘ Delaware, will have as much constitutional influence as the largest in the Union.’ This objection is made with an ill grace by those who pretend to be advocates for a *Federal*, in opposition to a *consolidated*, government. ‘ The Federal Farmer ’ confesses that ‘ the Senate is entirely on the Federal plan.’ And tell me, Sir, without this equality of voice in the Senate, what constitutional means have the small States of *preserving* that portion of independency which by this Constitution they will retain. This reservation to each State of equal power in the Senate is one striking proof that an entire consolidation or union of all the powers of government, in the general legislature, was never intended. For, in such a union of powers, the representation of each State in the Senate should, like that in the House of Representatives, be proportioned to the numbers of the people. But whether this equal power of each State in the Senate be proper or not, what other provision could be made ? The States represented in the General Convention were each sovereign and independent ; and, if the small States refused to yield that point, what was to be done ? Was the Union to be dissolved ? Notwithstanding this equality of power in the Senators of each State, have not the larger States made a great acquisition, by obtaining in the other branch of the legislature a representation proportioned to their strength and importance ? How much

more just will be their representation in the general government by the proposed Constitution than it is now, under the old articles of Confederation? In the choice of the President and Vice-President, the large States have also a voice proportioned to their numbers; unless, in the case of the President, no one candidate has a majority of the votes; for then the *Federal* principle is again to operate, and the President is to be selected by the votes of the *States*, the Representatives of each having one vote. On this branch of the government, the 'Federal Farmer' makes this observation, 'I suppose it was impracticable for the three large States, as they were called, to get the Senate formed on any other principles; but this only proves that we cannot form one general government on equal and just principles, and that we ought not to lodge in it such extensive powers, before we are convinced of the practicability of organizing it on just and equal principles.' Here we see the issue of all the objections of the 'Federal Farmer' and other opposers of the Constitution. They go to the rejection of every form of an efficient government for the United States; and if these gentlemen could prevail, no such government would obtain, and the Union would soon be dissolved. The fatal mischiefs that would result from such a dissolution need not be pointed out. I am happy, however, to find their opinions have so little influence. Two States have already unanimously adopted the Constitution. The opposition to it in Pennsylvania is evidently the opposition of a *State party*. This party is distinguished by the term *Constitutionalists*, which title they assumed as the warm advocates of the ill-arranged Constitution of this State. Their opponents called themselves Republicans; and the politics of the State have been constantly vibrating, as the one or the other party gained an ascendancy in the government. On the present question, however, the scene is greatly changed. Many, and those of the most sensible and worthy among the Constitutionalists, have decidedly declared themselves in favor of the proposed Constitution for the United States, and the Republicans, to a man, I believe, are its determined advocates. If it meets any opposition in the New England States, it will be chiefly from the Shaysites and paper-money men. But their numbers and character are alike contemptible.

“But to return to the ‘Federal Farmer.’ He mentions as an objection the eligibility of members of Congress to offices, civil and military, but without subjoining that, the moment they accept any such offices, they lose their seats in Congress. He objects, also, to the powers of the Senate as too extensive, and thinks they will too much control the President, and he even affects to tremble for the House of Representatives itself, as in danger of being oppressed by this mighty Senate; which is truly ridiculous. Can the Senate make war, raise armies, build navies, or *raise a shilling of money*, without the House of Representatives? No! Where, then, is the danger that this House will be oppressed? *But the Senate have, in effect, the power of conferring offices.* No such thing. They can only *approve* those whom the President shall *name* to office; and the President is to be chosen, mediately, by the *people*. The President will have no dependence on the State *governments*, and therefore will feel no inducements to submit himself to *their* Representatives. Even the ‘Federal Farmer’ admits ‘that the election of the President and Vice-President seems to be properly secured.’

“He objects to the powers of the judicial department, saying: ‘In the Judges of the Supreme Court are lodged the *law*, the *equity*, and the *fact*.’ These powers, he says, in well-balanced governments, are ever kept distinct. Why, Sir, there are no such governments in the world, save the British, and those which have been formed on the British model; that is, the governments of the United States. Except in those governments, a court of equity, distinct from a court of *law*, is unknown. And among the United States, two or three only, I believe, have such distinct courts of equity. In the rest, the courts of law possess also the powers of courts of equity, for the most common and useful purposes. ‘It is,’ says the ‘Federal Farmer,’ ‘very dangerous to vest, in the same Judge, power to decide on the law and also general powers in equity; for, if the law restrain him, he is only to step into his shoes of equity, and give what judgment his reason or opinion may dictate.’ Sir, this is all stuff. Read a few passages in ‘Blackstone’s Commentaries,’ and you will be convinced of it. ‘Equity’ (says he, Book III., chap-

ter xxvii.), 'is the soul and spirit of all law. Positive (or statute) law is construed, and rational law is made, by it. In this, equity is synonymous to justice ; in that, to the true sense and sound interpretation of the rule. But the very terms of a court of equity and a court of law, as contrasted to each other, are apt to confound and mislead us ; as if the one judged without equity, and the other was not bound by any law. Whereas, every definition or illustration to be met with, which now draws a line between the two jurisdictions, by setting law and equity in opposition to each other, will be found either totally erroneous or erroneous to a certain degree.' 'Thus, it is said that it is the business of a court of equity in England to abate the rigor of the common law. But no such power is contended for.' 'It is also said that a court of equity determines, according to the spirit of the rule, and not according to the strictness of the letter. But so also does a court of law. Both, for instance, are equally bound, and equally profess to interpret statutes according to the true intent of the legislature.' 'There is not a single rule of interpreting laws, whether equitably or strictly, that is not equally used by the Judges in the courts both of law and equity.' 'Each endeavors to fix and adopt the true sense of the law in question, and neither can enlarge, diminish, or alter that sense in a single tittle.' Where then, you will ask, consists the essential difference between the two courts ? Take Blackstone's answer : 'It principally consists in the different modes of administering justice in each ; in the *mode of proof*, the *mode of trial*, and the *mode of relief*.' From him, also, you will learn that an act of Parliament was passed, in the reign of Edward I. (see 'Commentaries,' Book III., chapter iv.), making provisions which, by a little liberality in the Judges of the courts of law, 'might have effectually answered all the purposes of a court of equity.' As our ideas of a court of equity are derived from the English jurisprudence, so, doubtless, the Convention, in declaring that the judicial power shall extend to all cases in *equity* as well as *law*, under the Federal jurisdiction, had, principally, a reference to the *mode of administering justice* in cases of equity, agreeably to the practice of the Court of Chancery in England.

“I intended, my dear Sir, to have examined all the principal objections of the ‘Federal Farmer;’ but to do it particularly, I find, would oblige me to write a volume; and I see in every page of his pamphlet so much disingenuity, I confess that I lose my patience; neither have I time to treat the subject much farther in detail. Let me observe generally that the ‘Federal Farmer,’ and other writers of the same stamp, in reciting the powers of the Congress, throw in expressions unduly to alarm their readers with ideas that those powers will be *arbitrarily* exercised, such as ‘will and pleasure,’ ‘at discretion,’ ‘absolute power,’ &c., &c. He says, ‘a power to levy and collect taxes, *at discretion*, is in itself of very great importance.’ This is very true, but what then? Does not the legislature of New York, and of every other State, possess the power of taxing the people *at discretion*, *at will and pleasure*? and, in this as well as many other things, is not their power *absolute*? But the presumption is that this *discretion*, *will and pleasure*, and *absolute power* will be under the direction of *reason*; and the presumption is so well founded, that the people are, in fact, under no apprehension of oppression from the exercise of such powers.

“I mentioned the disingenuity of the ‘Federal Farmer.’ In addition to the instances already noticed, take the following. Referring to the proposed Constitution, he says, ‘I wish the system adopted, with a few alterations; but those in my mind are essential ones.’ Attend then to his remarks on the system, and you will find he objects to *every* essential part, — to the smallness of the House of Representatives; to the Federal and small representation of the States in the Senate; to the President, as ‘a new species of executive,’ and possessing too little power; to the judiciary, as vested with various powers which ought to be separated, and exercised by different courts and bodies of men; and to Congress generally, as vested with too many powers. In a word, he objects to the whole system in the following passage: ‘I am fully convinced that we must organize the national government on *different principles*, and make the parts of it more efficient, and secure in it more effectually the different interests of the community, or else leave in the State governments some

powers proposed to be lodged in it; at least, till such an organization shall be found practicable.' He admits the formation of the Senate, and the smallness of the House of Representatives to be the result of our situation and the actual state of things, such, consequently, if we have any general government at all, we must be contented with. Yet, immediately after, he endeavors to alarm us with the apprehensions of corruption in those assemblies, because *so few* may constitute a majority in each, and therefore easily 'be influenced by bribes, offices, and civilities.' He admits that the power of regulating commerce, imposts, coin, &c., ought *clearly* to be vested in Congress; yet; in the next page, joining the powers respecting coin and commerce with others, he says, they 'will probably defeat the operations of the State laws and governments.' Thus he, like the other Antifederal writers, is perpetually conceding and retracting. They all know that the *people* of these States *feel* the necessity of an *efficient* Federal government, and therefore they *affect* to desire the same thing; but, in order to defeat the measure, not only object to every material part of the system, but artfully start vain objects of fear, and throw in here and there a sentence, importing that such an efficient general government, consistent with the liberties of the people, is in the nature of things *impracticable*.

"I will now, as concisely as possible, take notice of the powers of Congress, and inquire whether any which are improper or dangerous are proposed to be granted to them. But let me previously remark that the *people* of the United States form *one nation*: that it is evidently their interest and desire to continue *one nation*; although, for the more easy and advantageous management of the affairs of particular districts, the people have formed themselves into thirteen separate communities or States; that the people of these distinct States having certain common and general interests, it is obviously necessary that one common and general government should be erected to manage those interests for the best good of the whole: that, as all power resides originally in the *people*, they have a right to make such a distribution of it as they judge their true interests require; consequently they

may constitute such officers as they think best, and with such powers as they think proper to confer for the management of the affairs of their *respective communities*; and, at the same time, appoint another set of officers with general powers to conduct the common concerns of *all the communities or States united*.

“Let us now see whether a single power is proposed to be vested in the *general government*, which does not concern more than a *single State*.

“The general government will have power to declare war, to provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States, to borrow money on their credit, to raise armies and build navies, and to *make treaties* with foreign nations. Now, when powers are given to accomplish any particular thing, it is the dictate of common sense that such other subordinate powers as are indispensably necessary to that end should also be given, either expressly or by fair implication. But without the power of direct taxation, how can the general government with certainty provide for the common defence? raise armies, build navies, or repay moneys which it shall have borrowed? The imposts may be insufficient. Other sources of revenue, therefore, must be opened. It will be said, it has been said, ‘the Congress may make requisitions on the several States.’ True, and be denied! ‘But if any State refuses to furnish its quota, let the Congress have the power of compelling payment to be made by such delinquent State.’ And do you think, Sir, this *compulsive* mode more eligible than in the first instance to vest Congress with a *constitutional* power of levying taxes for necessary national purposes? When a person has once refused what he ought to grant, do we not often see that, from mere pride and obstinacy, he persists in the refusal? States are composed of men, and are influenced by similar passions. What if the thirteen States were quite removed from the sea-coast, and revenues from imposts were consequently out of the question, and at the same time their situation and circumstances should, as at present, require an intimate union for their common good and security, how should the common treasury be supplied? We have had too melancholy proofs, that *requisitions*

on the thirteen 'sovereign and independent States,' would be fruitless. The Congress must, then, in such case, have the power of direct taxation. And what would then be necessary for the *entire supplies* to the public treasury may, in our present situation, be equally necessary to make good the *deficiencies* of the revenues arising from commerce. I therefore am willing to submit to such direct taxation, whenever it shall be necessary to support the general government, and maintain the faith of the United States. And I am satisfied that, as every such tax will equally affect the persons and estates of all the members of the general legislature, the power of levying it will be exercised with that prudence and propriety which we have a right to expect from wise and honest Representatives. For, if they are not wise and honest, it will be our own fault in choosing them, and we shall have no right to complain.

"On a like principle it is proper that Congress should have power to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for calling it forth to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions. As the militia of different States may serve together, the great advantages of uniformity in their organization, arms, and discipline, must be obvious to every man who is possessed of any degree of military knowledge. But this uniformity can be introduced and maintained only by the power of the general government. It is also equally necessary that Congress should have power to call forth the militia for the purposes expressed in the Constitution. In the late war, pressing as was the common danger, we have been witnesses of the delays of States to furnish their contingents, and of their unequal exertions. If this power is vested in Congress, the calls will ever be proportioned in time as well as extent to the exigency of the service. Yet this power, useful and necessary as it is, has been objected to as dangerous, and in its nature oppressive; and, therefore, it is concluded that it ought to remain with the State legislatures. But who are they? The *servants* of the *people*, chosen by them to superintend the *local* concerns of their *particular States*. And who are the Congress? Can you give a different answer? are not *they* also the

servants of the *people*, chosen by them to superintend their *general* concerns in the *United States*. Only bear always in your mind, Sir, that the inhabitants of the United States are but *one people, one nation*; and all fears and jealousies, about the annihilation of State governments will vanish. Some men pride themselves in their particular State sovereignties, and are extremely jealous that the general government of the United States will swallow them up. Ridiculous! Do not the *people* constitute the *States*? are not the *people* the fountain of *all power*? and, whether this flow in thirteen distinct streams, or in one larger stream with thirteen branches, is not the *fountain* still the same? and the MAJESTY of the PEOPLE undiminished?

“ These objectors make a loud outcry about *standing armies*, as though a large and oppressive one, like the armies of the European nations, must be the necessary consequence of the adoption of this system. But this proceeds from either a want of discernment or a desire to excite a false alarm. We have a standing army at this time, — a small one indeed, and probably not adequate to the security of our frontiers (though Congress have not the means of enlarging it, however necessary it may become); and, whilst we have frontiers to defend and arsenals to secure, we must continue to have a standing army. The fallacy lies here. In Europe large standing armies are kept up to maintain the power of their *hereditary monarchs*, who generally are *absolute*. In these cases the standing armies are instruments to keep the people in slavery. But remember that, in the United States, a standing army cannot be raised or kept up without the *consent* of the *people*, by their Representatives in Congress; Representatives whose powers will have very limited durations, and who cannot lay a single burthen on the people of which they and their children will not bear their proportion. The English (and no people have been more jealous of their liberty) have never gone farther than to declare that a standing army ought not to be kept up *without the consent of Parliament*. It is very possible, indeed, that this consent may sometimes be improperly obtained through the undue and corrupt influence of an *hereditary monarch*. But as we have not, nor in the ordinary

course of our affairs have reason to expect, any such creature in the United States, we may make ourselves easy on this head. On this subject I will add one remark, — that vesting Congress with power to call out the militia, as the exigencies of the Union may require, instead of being complained of as a grievance, demands the warmest approbation of those who are in dread of a standing army; for that efficient command of the militia will for ever render it unnecessary to raise a permanent body of troops, excepting only the necessary guards required for the frontiers and arsenals.

“There is but one other objection which I have time to notice. That respects the judicial power. The ‘Federal Farmer’ and other objectors say, the causes between a State and citizens of another State, between citizens of different States, and between a State, or the citizens thereof, and the citizens or subjects of foreign States, should be left, as they now are, to the decision of the particular State courts. The other cases enumerated in the Constitution seem to be admitted as properly cognizable in the *Federal* courts. With respect to all the former, it may be said, generally, that as the local laws of the several States may differ from each other, as particular States may pass laws unjust in their nature, or partially unjust, as they regard foreigners and the citizens of other States, it seems to be a wise provision which puts it in the power of such foreigners and citizens to resort to a court where they may reasonably expect to obtain *impartial* justice. But as the courts of particular States will, in these cases, have a concurrent jurisdiction, so whilst they proceed with reasonable despatch, and support their characters by upright decisions, they will probably be almost exclusively resorted to. But there is a particular and very cogent reason for securing to *foreigners* a trial, either in the first instance or by appeal in a *Federal* court. With respect to *foreigners*, all the States form but *one nation*. This *nation* is responsible for the conduct of all its members towards foreign nations, their citizens, and subjects, and therefore ought to possess the power of doing justice to the latter. Without this power a single State, or one of its citizens, might embroil the whole Union in a foreign war.

“The trial by jury, in civil cases, I grant, is not explicitly secured by the Constitution ; but we have been told the reason of the omission : and to me it is satisfactory. In many of the civil causes subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal courts, trial by jury would evidently be improper ; in others, it was found impracticable in the Convention to fix on the mode of constituting juries. But we may assure ourselves that the first Congress will make provision for introducing it in every case in which it shall be proper and practicable. Recollect that the Congress of 1775 directed jury trials in the cases of captures at sea, and that the inconveniences soon discovered in that mode of trial obliged them to recommend an alteration, and to commit all admiralty causes to the decision of the Judge alone. So if the Convention had positively fixed a trial by jury in all the civil cases in which it is contended that it ought to have been established, it might have been found highly inconvenient in practice, as in the case above stated ; but, if fixed by the Constitution, the inconvenience would have had to be endured (whatever mischief might arise from it) until the Constitution itself should be altered.

“I have passed over unnoticed the other powers proposed to be vested in the Congress, because it seems to be generally admitted that they can properly be lodged nowhere else.

“I now hope, Sir, that I have presented you with such a view of the Federal Constitution as will make it appear to you not that engine of tyranny which its enemies would fain persuade us it will prove. On the contrary, I hope you will be convinced that 'tis the best Constitution we, at present, have any right to expect ; and, therefore, that we ought readily to adopt it. Future experience may suggest improvements which may be engrafted into it. But, Sir, for a clear and satisfactory explanation of it, I must refer you to Mr. Wilson's speeches in the Convention of this State. I am just informed that they will be published by themselves, and therefore appear sooner than I before expected. Read them with attention ; and you may read them with *confidence*, for he is a *great* and a *good* man.

“To satisfy you of my hearty approbation of it, I seriously

assure you that, if I were now on my dying bed and my sons were of mature age, my last words to them would be, Adopt this Constitution.

“ With sincere esteem, I remain, dear Sir, your friend and servant,

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“MR. CHARLES TILLINGHAST.

“ P. S. If this letter serves in any measure to remove your doubts and fears, perhaps it may produce the like effect on the minds of some other *candid* inquirers ; and therefore you may use it as you think proper : but only as from a *friend*, not suffering my *name* to appear, as it is of too little consequence to add weight to my sentiments, except with an *intimate friend*.”

CHAPTER XII.

Colonel Pickering returned to Wyoming.—Ineffectual Attempts to procure proper Measures of Legislation for the People of that Territory.—The whole Country much excited on the Question of ratifying the Federal Constitution.—Colonel Pickering's Abduction.—The Failure of the Design of his Captors.—Their Dispersion.—The final Establishment of Law, Order, and Peace in Wyoming.

1788.

WYOMING remained in apparent quiet for some time after Colonel Pickering's return; and he resumed the charge of his affairs, as appears from his correspondence. Writing to Major Hodgdon, from Wilkesbarre, January 16th, 1788, Wednesday morning, he says:—

“I have this moment received your favor of the 12th, for which I am much obliged. It will be impossible for me to leave this place so soon as I proposed; but, if I am well, nothing shall prevent my being in Philadelphia, so as to render such a statement of accounts as you mention before the first of March. In the mean time, I beg you to do what you can in the arrangement for that purpose.

“We moved into the new house last Saturday, and though 'tis unfinished, yet we have much more comfort than in that of Mr. Hollenback.

“The people are all quiet; and from present appearances, we have nothing to apprehend; so that my wife anxiously wishes for Charles and William to be brought up. The other two she knows are not in any danger of suffering. I expect George Geary, John Scott, and Dolly will go to the city next week, perhaps to set out on Monday; and we have thought of getting John Scott to return with Sally and the two boys immediately, before the snow fails. Tim and

Harry can come on horse back at any other time. But a sleigh is the only tolerable carriage for Charles and William."

He wrote again to Mr. Hodgdon, January 22d, as follows:—

"George Geary, John Scott and Dolly will set off this morning for Philadelphia, the sleighing being excellent. John Scott only is to return, but with him, his sister Sally and the children. You and my other friends may disapprove of this; but my wife is very desirous of having them with her, especially Charles and William; and we think it best that Tim and Harry should also return. Mr. Bowman (who formerly kept the school at Cambridge) undertakes to be their school-master. The truth of the matter is, I must lessen my expenses as much as possible. Charles and William must therefore come back, as we apprehend no hazard in the measure; and Tim and Harry have long enough trespassed upon the obliging hospitality of our friends. I expect they must be brought up in the spring, if not now, and consequently at much greater expense, and I have a confidence that the Assembly will revive the confirming law. Other reasons I may give when I see you. I have, therefore, to pray you to do whatever shall be necessary to expedite their return. I shall be sorry should John Scott stay above two days in the city, lest the snow should fail. If it be gone near the city, perhaps it will be best to get Mr. Thompson to carry them till they meet the snow. The horses may take the empty sleigh on bare ground. If, indeed, they find too little snow below, in going, John is to leave the sleigh where this happens, and there doubtless it can take them up again. My wife asks if Sally will be willing to return? She ought to be, and must be compelled, if she shows any reluctance; for she has lately got additional clothing (even to a degree of extravagance I now find), which will last her the year she has to serve. Besides, when I proposed to discharge her, she consented to return. I wish it to be remembered that the children bring with them all their clothes and books. Enclosed are letters to Mr. Peters and Captain Faulkener, which, if convenient, I will thank you to deliver.

"I have delivered to John Scott one bushel and a half of clean mustard-seed for sale, and sixteen pounds of good flax, which perhaps the milk-woman may take; if not, it must be sold. I just mention these two articles that you may ask John about them; for he can dispose of them without troubling you. The price of mustard-seed, I take it, is fixed at thirty-two shillings a bushel, and one shilling a quart; but I recollect old Mr. Hall once told me a bushel would hold about forty beer quarts. The mustard-seed cost me sixteen shillings and eightpence a bushel. Perhaps it may be worth raising here, as an article of remittance. I propose to raise an acre of hemp next summer; but I can get no seed in the settlement. The few trials of that article have turned out extremely well. I have directed John Scott to inquire whether any seed is to be got at Bethlehem, and at what price. I will thank you to inquire in the city. At Northumberland it was sold last year, I am told, at thirty shillings a bushel, which is monstrous. But Mr. Hollenback thinks it may be got down the river at ten shillings. The seed must be of the last summer's growth. I am told it takes four bushels for an acre. If to be had in the city to most advantage, pray procure it, and forward it to Haller's, if possible, while the sleighing lasts. My own sleigh, I suppose, will not be able to bring it. I very much wish to receive *two* sides of good neat's leather, and two or three sides of stout New England sole-leather, to answer some engagements and supply my own family, and one wax-leather calfskin. The sole-leather may lie in the bottom of the sleigh. I wish to receive by my sleigh four pounds of black pepper, one pound of allspice, one pound of mustard, which John Scott will get where he sells the seed, one and a half yards of strong cheap linsey, two or three of the roots of scarcity of Mr. Peters, wrapped up well to preserve them from the frost, a pint of best *Lima* beans (Mr. Francis, I guess, can inform where to get them), one pound of indigo.

"Sally's bed should be covered with a case made of tow cloth, of which you will find enough of mine in the chamber closet at Mr. Doz's. The bed may be placed in the bottom of the sleigh over the sole-leather, and behind the chair. The children (except perhaps Tim, as he can get out and run)

had best put on two or three pairs of stockings (the smallest first), without shoes; and if each could have, besides, a pair of socks, like half-boots, made of thick warm shaggy cloth, I think there would be no danger from the cold; or perhaps a pair of the thickest coarse stockings of the cheapest kind, for each of them, may do better than socks. Tim can have a pair to haul over his shoes. They all had mittens when I left them. These precautions, and the blankets Sally has, will render them perfectly secure. They all have great-coats, and all very good, except William's, and his will do, if a thick handkerchief be put over his neck and shoulders.

"Be so good as to look among the articles remaining in the store, and, if there be any things which can easily be carried in the sleigh, and which will be of much convenience to us, to put them in. The large tin painted kettle will be very convenient to us for taking up ashes. The large iron pot, which belonged to the brig, would be very useful, if we could get it here to boil potatoes, &c., for hogs.

"Addition. — Two pounds of ginger, five pounds of good hops, fourteen pounds of water biscuit, two small scissor sheaths, one dozen nail gimblets, one dozen hand-saw files, half-a-dozen files for finer saws, one fine tenon saw, one carpenter's adze, one piece or about twenty yards of calimanco for women's skirts, brown or other dark color.

"John Scott is ready to start, so I bid you affectionately adieu!"

Colonel Pickering's friends in Philadelphia did not all feel so confident as he did, that quiet and safety were fully restored. John Scott delivered the letter, with which he was charged, to Mr. Peters immediately upon reaching Philadelphia, and carried back the following answer:—

"BELMONT, January 27th, 1788.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I received your letter and was very happy to hear you are well and unmolested. I have not the same opinion of your security you seem to have, and beseech you not to trust

too far to it. You are, I confess, a better judge of circumstances than I am, but consider you have been deceived.

"It is natural for you to wish your children about you; but I am sure Tim is better here, under my ideas of matters there, than he would be at Wyoming. I don't know, however, whether I should have taken the liberty of acting against your desires had the winter been more favorable, and Tim been perfectly well. But he is now mending fast, having had a bad cold, which would be increased by such a journey. I have thought it best to detain him here, where he is very happy, and really wishes to stay. He goes constantly to school, and, I think, improves. I have done, under all circumstances, what, in the same situation, I should have wished to be done by me; and this is a rule I hope you will not blame me for, though it may not meet entirely your wishes.

"Mrs. Peters begs her affectionate and sincere good wishes to be presented to Mrs. Pickering and yourself. I hope to see you at the meeting of the Assembly, and that you will have a better opinion of our majority than their late proceedings have entitled them to. Many of them, I am sure, mean well, but are either bewildered or misled. I hope some plan of compromise will be fallen upon; and it will accelerate it much to bring with you the means of clearing up many prejudices, which seem strangely to operate with them. There is no man less interested than I am, and I believe I think dispassionately about it. I have turned the subject over since I have had leisure, and really I am more confirmed in the opinions I had, on the sudden, adopted when the matter was agitated in the House. I wish you every happiness, and am very affectionately yours,

"RICHARD PETERS.

"COLONEL PICKERING."

The following letter from Dr. Rush will be read with interest:—

"PHILADELPHIA, January 29th, 1788.

"DEAR SIR,

"I rejoice with your numerous friends in your agreeable prospects of peace and order in Luzerne county.

"The papers will give you an account of the progress of

Federal principles and events. Massachusetts is much divided, owing to the Province of Maine uniting with the insurgent counties. The opposition, it is said, is conducted by S. Adams. King and Gorham write desponding letters to their friends in the Middle States. But all will, I have no doubt, yet end well. A vessel, lately arrived at Cape Ann, brings the agreeable account of Georgia having ratified the Constitution.

"Our invaluable friend, Mr. Wilson, has concluded to embark for Europe in the spring to try to extricate himself from his present difficulties by disposing of some of his lands. His success cannot fail of adding to the value of all the lands in Pennsylvania.

"Mr. Coxe is full of a scheme of rendering the Susquehanna navigable by means of a lock upon one of the lakes or springs, near the head-waters of the river. He proposes to defray the expense of it, by means of an incorporated company, in imitation of the one formed under the direction of General Washington. Mr. Francis has adopted the plan, and will push it with all his zeal and influence.

"Mrs. Rush (who has lately been much afflicted, from the loss of our youngest boy) joins in best compliments to Mrs. Pickering, with, dear Sir, yours

Sincerely and affectionately,

"BENJAMIN RUSH.

"P. S. General St. Clair informs me that he left the western countries in peace, disposed, he thinks, not to oppose by force the new government."

Agreeably to the urgent advices of his friends, and others desirous of bringing the Assembly to some decisive action in reference to the Wyoming lands, he went down to Philadelphia in February; but all efforts failed. The open opposition of certain interested parties, and the secret intrigues of others who had views of their own prompting them to keep up the insurrectionary spirit in Luzerne county, prevented all legislation. He returned

to Wyoming, addressing on his way a letter to Mr. Hodgdon, as follows : —

“ At ZAWITS, fifteen miles beyond HALLER’S,
Friday, February 29th, 1788.

“ We arrived here about noon to-day ; but the arbitration with Learn will oblige us to stay here to-night.

“ At Echart’s, at White Marsh, I left a small box which I received of Captain Faulkener’s. Echart put the things in his bar closet, and handed them out again, and must have overlooked the box. I shall write a line to Echart, and request him to send it to Captain Faulkener again. I am sorry it was left, as it was a present to Harry.

“ There was no sleighing as far as Shull’s. But two hundred yards beyond his house it was very good, and continued so to this place, excepting only the south side of a hill, between Shull’s and Bethlehem. Pocono, or Jones’s Creek, was open, but we forded it with ease. We have Pocono to cross again, just beyond Learn’s, where, I am told, the entrance is bad. The other creeks, Tobyhanna, Lehi, and Bear’s Creek, are yet all fast.

“ The arbitrators have just agreed, and award £2 12s. 6d., in addition to the five dollars I have already paid him, and costs.

“ I have given Colonel Stroud an order on you for seven dollars, as he agrees to pay the money to Learn. I have not so much with me.”

From such letters and parts of letters as are given, the reader will form an idea of the annoyances and trials of all sorts to which Colonel Pickering was subjected, in this period and passage of his life. As he says, in writing to a friend, from his first going to Wyoming he had been kept “ in hot water.” It will appear also to what financial straits he was reduced. His patrimony, balances in his favor in settling the affairs of the mercantile partnership with Major Hodgdon, and what little he had saved in the Revolutionary service, were rapidly disappearing.

But he persevered, with good heart and faith, in the work of procuring a just determination of the questions relating to the county of Luzerne, so long and so strangely kept pending by the legislature of the State, — with how little encouragement, appears in the following letter: —

“ASSEMBLY ROOM, March 15th.

“DEAR SIR,

“Colonel Hodgdon just calling me out to let me know there would be an opportunity to write you this morning on the Wyoming business, I shall, in three words, tell you it is in the worst possible state. We have two parties in the House; one I detest, the other I despise. The Constitutionals would rather stimulate than repress any thing that tended to insurgency and civil war, and so systematically refuse any measures likely to settle the peace of the country. The Republicans are bewildered about compensations, and, not agreeing in the mode, fatally acquiesce in doing nothing.

“I have been urging the necessity of separating the confirming and compensating parts of the bill not necessarily connected, as the only means of saving us from confusion, but can get no second. I have no hope left.

“Your humble servant,

“GEORGE CLYMER.”

The following letter is from Colonel Pickering's brother-in-law, Paine Wingate, then a delegate from New Hampshire in the old Congress: —

“NEW YORK, March 29th, 1788.

“DEAR SIR,

“Mr. Hodgdon, who is now in this city, informs me that he can frequently transmit letters to you from Philadelphia, and by him I improve this opportunity of writing to you. The distance of your situation from New Hampshire, and the difficulty of an intercourse between us, has prevented my giving, and, I suppose, receiving from you any direct intelligence for a long time. But this separation has not obliterated my re-

membrance of, or lessened my affection for you. It is with particular satisfaction that I sometimes hear of your welfare by our friends at Salem. This pleasure I had in the beginning of February, when your brother told me that he had received a letter from you, dated the first of January, at which time you were setting out for your new settlement; and Mr. Hodgdon tells me that you have since been down, and returned again very lately, and that the last intelligence was that your family were all well, and that your situation was very agreeable. I rejoice in every circumstance that contributes to your domestic happiness and extensive usefulness in life; but could wish that you had believed those two objects obtainable somewhere within the circle of your family connections and former friends. Your brother was remarkably well when I was there, in February. I think he appeared to enjoy as good health and spirits as I have known him have for several years. All the other branches of the family were well. Your son came with me from Salem to Boston in a sleigh for the sake of a ride, and to see the bridges, &c., and returned again the same day with a lad who brought me on. Master John is sensible, and after some acquaintance is sufficiently sociable, though with strangers rather reserved. He has those qualities which, I think, will render him, with the advantages of education that he will enjoy, both amiable and useful, and in whom a parent will have great satisfaction. Your other children I have not seen; but I dare say they afford you the pleasing hopes of a fond father. I have received a letter from my family, dated March 17th, when they were all well. Polly is married, and I hope and believe to a worthy and agreeable husband. She will live about one mile from me. Sally is a woman grown. George and John are two good boys, and Betsey, my youngest, is about five years old, which, I suppose, will finish our complement of children. My wife enjoys uninterrupted health, and changes with the succession of years as little as almost anybody. I shall write to her by the post to-day, and let her know that I have heard of you by Mr. Hodgdon, which will make a letter very welcome to her, on your account, if not on mine.

“I have been in New York since February 10th, and find

my situation as agreeable as I could expect, considering that I am very domestic, and habituated to an active life. I have nothing very important to communicate to you. The subject which engages the general attention at this time is the new Constitution. What will be the fate of it is yet uncertain; but those who are well-wishers to their country, and best know the situation we are in, are the most sensible of the necessity of its adoption, and great pains are taken to obtain the end. On the other hand, there are powerful opposers to it, who avail themselves of some popular objections, and they are too successful with the less knowing part of the country. In New Hampshire, when the Convention met, there was a majority prejudiced against the plan. They were chiefly from the interior parts of the State, and many of the delegates were instructed to vote against it. The most distinguished characters were in favor of it, and, after debating it for some time, there were a few converts made, who did not think themselves at liberty to go against their instructions, and therefore obtained an adjournment. There is, I think, a probability that it will finally be adopted in New Hampshire, although considerable danger that it will not. New York is very doubtful, but it is not despaired of. Virginia and North Carolina much in the same situation. Maryland and South Carolina are supposed to be Federal. These two States will decide before the others, and, if they should agree to adopt, there will be but one of the doubtful ones necessary to make up the nine. The important decision upon the subject cannot be known before the last of July; and, at any rate, I do not see that the new Constitution can be got to go as early as December next. Nothing but the hope of a new, can, I fear, keep the old, Constitution from dissolution long. ‘Sed nunquam de Republica desperandum.’ The newspapers are so filled with lies that no dependence can be put on any account you receive in them respecting the Constitution.

“I hope I shall soon have the pleasure of hearing from you by letter, which direct to me, in Congress, at New York. If you have any letters which you wish at any time to forward to Salem, or to any friends eastward, and if you will put them under cover to me, I will take the care of them, and send

them, without hazard or expense, to the place of destination. If Congress should not adjourn, which yet is uncertain, it is likely that I shall remain in this place until October next.

“ I am, dear Sir, with sentiments of particular esteem and affection, your friend and brother,

“ PAINE WINGATE.

“ N. B. I desire my love to Mrs. Pickering.”

An extract from a letter written June 25th to Colonel Pickering by Tench Coxe will sufficiently show, in addition to what has been adduced, the deep anxiety that pervaded the country, while the question of adopting the Federal Constitution was pending with fearful uncertainty as to the result.

“ The prospect on the Constitution in Virginia is critical, though I hope we shall have it adopted there. The majority will be within six, as Mr. Madison writes me. Governor Randolph is of the same opinion. The people of Kentucky, ten in number, hold the balance. It is expected they will divide, in which case we shall have a majority of six. A dreadful situation for the enlightened, populous, and wealthy countries on the Atlantic coast. New Hampshire, it is *confidently* said, will adopt. North Carolina will do the same, if Virginia does not object. The last four are much more uncertain than the first eight, so that we have reason to be thankful for the order in which Providence has disposed the Conventions.”

The American States were all kept in painful uncertainty and feverish excitement during nearly the entire year of 1788. The Confederation was felt to be falling to pieces by its own inadequacy and weakness; and no man could tell whether the Constitution of the United States, then under consideration, would be adopted by the requisite nine States, or any other plan of union could ever be devised and established. The diffi-

culty, irregularity, and tardiness of communication left all in the dark. It was known that everywhere there was an active and determined opposition to the new system of government submitted to the Conventions gathering and to be gathered, in the several States, for its ratification or rejection. Many distinguished leaders of the people, having exaggerated fears that the proposed Constitution, in some way, would endanger the public liberty, were arrayed against it. In most of the States, the relative strength of parties could not be ascertained, and in several of the most important ones the question was finally decided by an extremely close vote. So highly were the people wrought up, that the news of ratification by State after State, arriving after the lapse of long intervals of time, was welcomed by the ringing of bells and every form of expressing grateful joy.

Pennsylvania, more, perhaps, than any other State, was convulsed by the agitation. The inefficiency of its existing government, and the peculiar condition of its domestic parties, gave rise to wide-spread discontent and apprehensions.

All these things reached, in baleful influence, frontier settlements, and especially the Wyoming Valley. A lawless and reckless spirit, the result of its singular history, and fostered by the unstable state of things everywhere, was prevalent among its people, which the unaccountable capriciousness and blind obstinacy of the House of Assembly, in not adopting and adhering to a just and equitable policy in meeting the question of the titles of the inhabitants to their lands, heightened to exasperation, bringing them to the brink of rebellion. The insurgent elements came to a crisis, in an outrage

upon Colonel Pickering, which has few, if any, parallels in the history of civilized communities. He thus related the story, as it lay in his memory, thirty years afterwards in the letter to his son already quoted.

“Franklin remained in jail at Philadelphia. This put a stop for a short time to the unwarrantable measures of the Susquehanna Company, and damped the zeal of their partisans at Wyoming. Next to his confinement, they seemed to have thought my influence in the county was most adverse to their schemes. How to get rid of me was the question. I presume it engaged their attention for some months. In the spring of 1788, as early I think as April, there were indications of some plot against me; and then, or soon after, it was menacingly intimated to me by Major Jenkins (I doubt not in pursuance of instructions from the Susquehanna Company) in the hope, probably, so to alarm as to induce me voluntarily to quit the country. In this they were disappointed. I felt no inclination to abandon my farm and buildings, which had cost me more money than I could again command, — nor to relinquish the cause in which I had engaged; so I pursued my occupations as usual.

“By the month of June, the indications of some sort of an attack upon me became more apparent. To guard against it by shutting myself up in my house would have been fruitless; because, if determined to arrest me, my house was not strong enough to exclude them. Besides, if I must abandon my business, I might as well abandon the county. I therefore remained at my post.

“On the 26th of June, at about eleven at night, when your mother and I were asleep, and your brother Edward, nine months old, was lying on my arm, I was awakened by a violent opening of the door of the room. ‘Who’s there?’ I asked. ‘Get up,’ was the answer. ‘Don’t strike!’ said I: ‘I have an infant on my arm.’ I had no doubt that the intruders were ruffians, come to execute the long-menaced attack.

“I rolled Edward from my arm, rose and put on my clothes. Your mother slipped out on the other side of the bed; and,

putting on some clothes, went to the kitchen, and soon returned with a lighted candle. Then we saw the room filled with men, armed with guns and hatchets, having their faces blacked and handkerchiefs tied round their heads. Their first act was to pinion me; tying my arms together with a cord, above my elbows and crossed over my back. To the middle of this cord they tied another, long enough for one of them to take hold of, to prevent my escaping from them. They told me it would be well to take a blanket or outer garment; for I should be a long time in a situation where I should want it.* I desired your mother to get me an old surtout, which was in the chamber.† She quickly returned, and I received it on one of my arms. They then led me off, and hastened through the village of Wilkesbarre, in perfect silence. Having travelled a couple of miles, they halted a few minutes. Then, resuming their march, proceeded to Pittstown, ten or eleven miles up the river from Wilkesbarre. Here they stopped at a tavern, and called for whiskey, offering some to me, which I did not accept: I drank some water.

“In twenty minutes they left this house and pursued their march. There were about fifteen of them, arranged in my front, my rear, and on both flanks. We were in the darkness and stillness of night. As we proceeded, one of the ruffians at my side thus accosted me: ‘Now if you will only write two or three lines to the Executive Council they will discharge Colonel Franklin, and then we will release you.’ Instantly I answered: ‘The Executive Council better understand their duty than to discharge a traitor to procure the release of an innocent man.’ ‘Damn him!’ exclaimed a

* “When I stepped out of bed, the first garment I took up was a coat, in a pocket of which was a packet of letters which I had written to one or more of my acquaintance, members of Congress (then sitting at New York), detailing the conduct and characters of some of the leaders in the nefarious measures of the Susquehanna Company, which letters Mr. Andrew Ellicott, then at Wilkesbarre, and who was to set off for Philadelphia the next morning, was to take with him. I dropped the coat, and felt for a pair of fustian trowsers, and a fustian jacket with sleeves. These I put on, and my shoes.”

† “Your mother afterwards informed me that one of the ruffians followed her to the chamber, and threatened to tomahawk her, if she made any noise.”

voice before me, 'why don't you tomahawk him?' This wrath of the ruffian was excited by the word 'traitor,' applied to their old leader Franklin. No more words were uttered on the subject.

"We soon reached the River Lachawannack, about two miles from the tavern. After searching a little while they found a canoe, in which some of them passed over. On its return I stepped in, with others of the gang. The water was low, and the canoe touched the bottom before we reached the shore. I was going to step out and wade to the shore. 'Stop!' said one of them, who had a pack at his back. He waded to the shore, laid down his pack, returned to the side of the canoe, *and carried me on his back to the shore!*

'Proceeding upwards, we in a little while came to a ferry. The day had dawned. They crossed over in a scow (a large flat-bottomed boat) to the western side of the Susquehanna; and we continued our march on the shore of the river, for an hour or two, then struck into the woods, and pursued the course upwards, out of sight of the river. About four in the afternoon they arrived at a log-house near the bank of the river, about thirty miles above Wilkesbarre. Here they had victuals cooked, and I ate with a good appetite, having fasted since I was taken the preceding night.

"Seeing a bed in the room, I laid myself down upon it. I do not recollect when they unpinioned me. I had lain but a little while, when a man arrived in a boat from Jacob's Plains, a small settlement about two miles and a half above Wilkesbarre. I knew the man. The ruffians (supposing that I was asleep) inquired with eagerness what was the news below; and whether the militia had turned out to pursue them. He answered in the affirmative. I immediately saw that I should not be suffered to keep my place on the bed. In a few minutes one of them came to the bedside, and said, 'Get up.' I rose, and they took me directly back from the river, a quarter of a mile; and behind a rising ground they rested for the night. It thundered, and a heavy rain soon wet us to the skin. At daylight one of the crew went to the house, and, finding all quiet, he returned, and we all went thither. The drying of our clothes and eating break-

fast employed us till about ten o'clock. Standing with them on the bank of the river, I observed a man on the other side, leading a horse. It was on the shore of the river. Being near-sighted, I did not know him. But one of them exclaimed, 'There goes Major Jenkins now; a damned, slinking ——.' By this *courteous* observation on the second man of the party, and the first in Franklin's absence, it was apparent that, after encouraging and engaging them in the diabolical outrage upon me, he had deserted them. He, in fact, kept on his route, went into the State of New York, and there — being a land-surveyor — found employment during the residue of the season, and until tranquillity was finally restored to the county.

"By this time the blacking had disappeared from the faces of the ruffians; when I found two of them to be sons of one Dudley, a carpenter, and a near neighbor at Wilkesbarre. The others were all before unknown to me.

"They now prepared to cross over to the eastern side of the Susquehanna. Gideon Dudley came up to me with a pair of handcuffs, with which to manacle me. To this I objected, as they were going to cross the river in a small canoe, and I desired to have a chance of saving my life by swimming, if it should overset. At this moment Mr. Earl (whom I had not known, but who was father to two of the party) interposed, telling Dudley that there was no danger of an escape, and advising him not to put the irons upon me. He accordingly forbore. We crossed the river, and they pursued their march. In an hour they halted; the leader of the band selected four, and bid the rest go on. With these four and me he darted directly into the woods. This excited some apprehension in me of personal mischief; especially as one of them, by the name of Cady, sustained, as I somehow understood, a very bad character. The leader of this band was a hunter, and had his rifle-gun with him. As we proceeded a fawn was started, and as he bounded along the hunter shot him, and in five minutes had his skin off and the carcass slung at his back. At the distance of three or four miles from the river, they halted close by a very small run of water. A fire being quickly kindled, they began to cook

some of the venison. The hunter took the first cut. They sharpened small sticks, at both ends, running one into a slice of the fawn and setting the other end into the ground, the top of the stick bearing so near the fire as to broil the flesh. Being hungry, I borrowed one of their knives and followed their example. I observed the hunter tending his steak with great nicety, and sprinkling it with a little sauce. As soon as it was done he, with a very good grace, presented it to me.

“ Before night they cut down some limbs of trees and formed a slight booth, to shelter us from the dew. One of them taking post as a sentinel, we lay down on the ground; my pillow was a stone. In this station we remained about a week. At first they had some good salt pork and wheaten bread, that lasted two or three days, after which they got Indian meal, which they made into cakes, or fried as pancakes, in the fat of the pork. Of the pork they were very sparing, frying only two or three small slices at a time, and cutting them up in the pan. Such was our breakfast, dinner, and supper. My share did not exceed five mouthfuls of pork at each meal.* They fared better, sopping up with their bread or cakes, all the fat in the pan, of which I felt no inclination to partake. It was here I told them they would repent of their doings; and instead of being supported by four hundred men in the county, as they had professed to believe, that they would be abandoned to their fate.

“ From this station they marched a few miles, and took another in a narrow valley, a sequestered place, and about two or three miles from the Susquehanna. We had no sooner halted than they came to me with a chain, five or six feet long, having at one end a band like the bands of horse-fetters. Colonel Franklin, they said, had been put in irons, in the Philadelphia jail, and they must put irons on me, although it was not agreeable to them to do it; ‘but their great men required it.’ Satisfied that it would be in vain to remon-

* “ Yet I never felt more alert and vigorous in my life; which I ascribed to my necessary extreme temperance.”

strate, I was silent. They fixed the band of the chain round my ankle, securing it with a flat key, which they twisted to prevent it being got off without a tool to untwist the key. The other end of the chain they fastened by a staple to a tree. In this situation I remained an hour or more; and they employed themselves in forming a booth with the boughs of trees. This chain, besides its conformity with the orders of their 'great men,' saved my gentlemen from mounting guard every night. When we lay down they placed me in the middle, and one of them wrapped the chain round one of his legs, so that I could not rise to attempt to escape without waking him up. But I had determined not to make the attempt, for I soon considered that my life was not in danger; and I expected them to grow weary of their enterprise, so I patiently endured present affliction. Besides, if I escaped they could take me again, unless I quitted the county, which was the precise object of the outrage, to get rid of me.

"We had been in this valley but two or three days, when one morning, whilst all my guards were fast asleep, I heard a brisk firing of musketry. It was a skirmish, I had no doubt, between the 'Boys' — as these fellows called their party — and the militia, who had come from below to discover *them* and rescue *me*. But I let them sleep on, nor did I tell them of the firing after they awoke. After breakfast one of them went down to a house by the river, in their interest, and returned in haste to tell his comrades that the 'Boys' and the militia had met, and that in the battle Captain Ross, who commanded the militia, was mortally wounded.* At the close of this or the next day they marched down to the river, and sought for a canoe to cross over to the western side, but could find none. We were now at Black-Walnut Bottom, about forty-four miles above Wilkesbarre. Thus disappointed they marched back into the woods, and we lay down for the night. The next day, towards evening, they went again to the river and crossed it. It was so dark that at the distance

* * "He was badly wounded, but recovered. Gideon Dudley received from the militia a ball through his hand."

of thirty or forty yards we might pass unseen. They passed through a thick wood to the house of one Kilborn, father to two of the party. There we lodged. The next morning they pushed back into the woods, about four miles from the river. This was the third and last station. This changing from place to place was to prevent their being discovered by the militia, who came from below, at different times, to find them.

“On the 15th of July Gideon Dudley (who now appeared to have the command), with two others, came out to our station. It was late in the afternoon. After lounging about for some time, as if they did not know what to do with themselves, they approached me; and Dudley asked, ‘Don’t you wish to be set at liberty?’ ‘To be sure I do,’ was my answer. After a little pause Dudley again accosted me. ‘What will you do for us if we set you at liberty?’ ‘What do you wish me to do for you?’ was my reply, ‘Will you intercede for Colonel Franklin’s pardon?’ ‘No, I will not.’ This answer was evidently unexpected; they were confounded, and, retiring, they for some time laid their heads together. Then again coming near, one of them asked, ‘Will you intercede for *our* pardon?’ After a momentary pause I answered, ‘While I have been in your hands you have told me of your “great men,” and that you have been acting in obedience to their orders. By them you have been misled and deceived. Give me their names, and I have no doubt of obtaining *your* pardon.’ This they could not do they said, without going down to their head-quarters and consulting the main body; and turned on their heels to depart. ‘Stop,’ said I, ‘and knock off this chain.’ They instantly took off the chain that I had carried about for ten days.

“I lay down with my guard that night, not doubting of my speedy release. As soon as it was light I rose, put the firebrands together (in the woods a fire is generally kept up at night, even in the warmest weather), mixed up some of their miserable coarse Indian-meal for cakes, spread the dough on pieces of hemlock bark (the usual trenchers), and set them to the fire. As soon as it was light enough to see *our green tea*, I went to gather it. This was the *winter green*, bearing red

berries, which went by the name of partridge berries. Infused in boiling water the winter green makes a tolerable warm beverage.*

“By the time my guard were awake, the tea was boiled and the cakes were baked. I told them that, expecting to be released, I had risen and got the breakfast ready, in order to gain time; for if released, I had a particular desire to reach home the next day.† I then proposed that we should go to their head-quarters, without delay; where, if released, it would be well; if not, I would come back with them again into the woods. They readily assented, — took up their kettle and frying-pan (our kitchen furniture), — and down we marched. When arrived near to their head-quarters, they halted. One went to announce our arrival. Two or three came out, Gideon Dudley at their head, when he put to me the original question, “Will you intercede for Colonel Franklin’s pardon?” “I will answer no question till I am set at liberty,” was my return. They conducted me into Kilborn’s house.

“It was now the 16th of July. Nineteen days had passed away, while I had been their prisoner. Having no razor, nor a second shirt, I had neither shaved nor changed my linen during that whole time. They had told me, if I desired clothing or any thing else from home, and I would write for them, they should be brought to me. I accordingly wrote to your mother for clothing, and for a book. She sent them up as directed, and they arrived at Zebulon Marcy’s, at Tunkhannock; and there I found them, after I was released. The shirt I wore from home I repeatedly took off, and washed, as well as I could, in cold water and without soap. As soon as I entered Kilborn’s house, they brought me a razor and soap to shave, and a clean shirt and pair of stockings; and told

* “They once asked me if I should like a dish of coffee. ‘A dish of coffee by all means,’ I answered. They went to work. Boiling water in their iron pot, to make it clean, then emptying it, they set it over the fire to heat. They next strewed into it some Indian-meal; and when this was roasted, they poured in water; and as soon as it boiled, the coffee was made. It was an agreeable change for our green tea.”

† “It would be the 17th of July,— my birthday.

me I was at liberty. They roasted some chickens, and gave me as good a dinner as the poor wretches could furnish.

"While dinner was preparing, they renewed their request, that I would intercede for Franklin's pardon. This I again peremptorily refused to do. Then they made the same request for themselves; and I again told them I could venture to assure them of pardons, if they would give me the names of their 'great men' who had instigated them to commit the outrage I had endured at their hands. They consulted together for some time; and finally told me they could not give up their names. 'This (I said to them) is a very unwise determination. Here are two-and-twenty of you (I had counted them) who may all obtain pardon, if you will give me the names of your employers; and among so many, some one at least, to save himself, will turn State's evidence; you had better therefore give me the names of the men who have engaged you in this wicked business.' 'Whoever does it (said Gideon Dudley) ought to go to hell, and be damned everlastingly.'

"They made a last request, that I would write a petition for them to the Executive Council, praying for pardons, and, carrying it with me to Wilkesbarre, take an opportunity to send it to Philadelphia. With this, undeserving as they were, I complied.

"It was now late in the afternoon; and unless I went to Tunkhannock (distant twelve miles) that night, I could not reach home the next day. They had a good boat in which they carried me down. It was dark when they landed. I had only set my foot on shore, when the two Earls came to me aside, and offered to become evidences for the State upon an assurance of pardon. This I ventured to give them: but the rogues, when brought before the court, divulged none of the names of their 'great men;' and reluctantly furnished any evidence against their companions.

"Walking from the landing-place about a mile, across the Tunkhannock bottom land, we arrived at the house of Zebulon Marcy, to get supper and lodging. There I found the bundle of clothing which your mother had sent up for me; and there, also, I found an inhabitant of Pittstown, going

down the river as far as Lachawannock Creek. And Tuttle, one of the 'Boys,' said he would go down with us, and take his chance. The next morning we three set off in a canoe. Landing the man destined for Lachawannock, the other went on with me to Wilkesbarre. On the way, he told me that he had joined the 'Boys' but two or three days before, in order to discover where I was, and get me rescued out of their hands.

"Stepping ashore at Wilkesbarre, I walked directly to our house. You were standing at the front-door. As I drew near, you looked a moment, appeared frightened, and retired. Before I reached the door, your mother came, with Edward in her arms. Consternation marked her countenance, as if I had been an apparition. My return so soon was wholly unexpected; and she looked at me, as if to satisfy herself of the reality."

The accuracy of Colonel Pickering's memory, as to the details in the narrative, given in 1818, of this extraordinary transaction, the body of which has now been presented, is remarkably evinced by letters written at and immediately after the time. He speaks of his having been allowed to send to his wife for certain necessary articles. In some way the materials for writing were provided, and the letter is found among his manuscripts. The paper and ink were of so poor a quality, that it is with difficulty that it can be deciphered. The circumstances under which it was composed invest it with interest, and it is, in every way, a characteristic document. The name of the place where it was written was, as usual, given with the date, but thoroughly obliterated. His captors were too cautious to allow it to stand, and he, no doubt, was entirely willing not to have their kindness, in suffering him to make the communication lead to their exposure.

"July 3d, 1788.

"MY DEAR BECKEY,

"I hoped, ere this, to have relieved your anxiety in some degree, by informing you that I was alive and well. We marched all the night, and the next day, after I was taken; and, as one half of the time it was through pathless woods, you may suppose I was not a little fatigued. In this I have since had no reason to complain. I have constantly lodged in the woods, sometimes in the open air, but generally under a shelter of bushes, at one time covered with bark which kept us from the rain. I know not how long I may be in such a situation, and shall therefore mention a few articles necessary to render it more tolerable; but send nothing else, as more would be burthensome in my movable condition. Though, excepting two days, when we had venison, my constant food has been fried salt pork and bread, with water for my drink, yet I am in perfect health; and as I eat this food with appetite, I desire you to send no article of diet, except one pound of chocolate and a pound of sugar.

"You must certainly understand that I was taken and am detained for the purpose of redeeming Franklin from jail. Had he been liberated lately on bail, they say this difficulty would not have arisen; some would be satisfied with less, some with more. While one would be contented if he were bailed, on condition of his residing in Connecticut or elsewhere, out of this State, another desires that he may be bailed at large. At the same time it is suggested that his leading friends here did not intend he should reside in this county, had he been liberated when Perkins went with the bail-bond to Philadelphia. What steps the government will take I know not; but in considering the means of my redemption they will doubtless consult the dignity and safety of the State. This may prolong my confinement, and consequently add to your distress and mine; but, my dear, we cannot expect that the dignity and safety of the State should be sacrificed to the interests of an individual family. I beg you, therefore, to resume that patience and fortitude which you have so often manifested, and trust to that kind and wise Providence, under which we have hitherto been preserved,

for my deliverance from my present confinement. For my own part, I feel resigned to my fate, as it was undeserved from the hands of *man*, especially of the people of this county, whom, as a body, I have uniformly striven to serve, in every thing consistent with justice and with prudence. My captors and keepers have repeatedly said I should be well used ; but used as Franklin has been. Accordingly, this day my fetters were put on. My keepers discovered some feeling on this occasion, and apologized for putting me in chains, by saying, *Such were their orders*. In other respects I live as they do. They are civil ; and take pains to make me as comfortable as my situation will admit.

“ The following articles I wish to have sent me, as early as may be, viz. : My old camlet cloak, two pairs of my strongest worsted stockings, one shirt, one coarse pocket-handkerchief, one coarse towel, half a pound of soap, half a quire of paper, two quills, my penknife, my leathern gloves, needle, thread, and worsted yarn (the thread to darn my fustian trowsers), one pound of chocolate and one pound of sugar. To these add Dr. Price’s sermons, which I was lately reading to you and Betsey. All these may be put into a strong bag, which will make a pack convenient to carry at the back ; and to sling it, send me four yards of the strong yellow binding. I forgot shoes. Send my strongest pair. Send also a small-toothed comb.

“ Our friend Mr. Hodgdon will be anxious to learn what is my condition. For his information send him such extracts from this letter, as you think proper.

“ If I had time I should send some particular directions about my farming business ; but I must wait another conveyance, lest I lose the present. God preserve you ! Give my love to your sister, and kiss our dear boys for me. Ever yours,

“ TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“ P. S. If Mr. Bowman is at leisure, perhaps he may like to see the country, as far as Tunkhannock, and bring the things I send for. If not, send them by some trusty hand, who knows the way ; and let them be left at Zebulon Marcy’s. But do not send William Darton, who must attend to my

farming business. My keepers say the things shall be safely brought to me from Mr. Marcy's.

"Having a little more time, I add. Let Darton see that all my hay be cut in season, and all the grain before it is too ripe. Mr. Roberts, at Mill Creek, told me he had a proper cradling scythe, and would be glad to assist me in harvesting. If Darton wants help, let him get him, or whom he can. Roberts said he could cradle four acres in a day. I do not know what share I am to have of the wheat that Asa Bennet has sowed on my meadow lot; but Nathan Waller knows what was the original agreement, and let Darton ask him. I rather think it will be best to receive my share as it stands on the ground. Let the grass be cut when dry, and put in small grass cocks the same day, to stand till they are dry enough to be doubled or trebled, and then to stand till brought home and stacked. The hay stacks I would have made at the southern end of the barn-yard, next the fence, and the stacks of grain along the eastern side, next the fence. Before I left home I saw some grass at the lower end of my flat, which wanted cutting. Let Darton look to the meadow by Wickheyser's, and have it mowed in season. If he has not time, he may get Wickheyser to cut and make it, and stack it on the spot, near Wickheyser's sheds.

"William George, I suppose, is with you. Let him and Timothy, every morning, search for worms among the beans and other things, or, I fear, you will not have vegetables for the family. In the field are several vacant beds, which I would have set with cabbage plants, one row along the middle of each bed, and the plants eighteen inches apart; except one or two of the beds, which will be wanted when the celery is fit to transplant. Near the rye in the home field is some ground not planted or sowed. If Darton thinks it is not too late, he may plant it with the common potato; otherwise sow turnip-seed in all the hills, and in all the vacant corn hills; or he may set such vacant hills with cabbage plants, of which I left two parcels in the garden. If there should arrive any scythes from Middletown, and a cradling scythe or two among them, Darton may hang one, or both if he pleases."

The minute directions given to Darton show how annoying and injurious his sudden removal from home and his farm at that season must have been. The calm, patient, and patriotic spirit pervading this letter is quite observable. There are no indications of petulance or irritation. He perfectly subordinates, and demonstrates an entire willingness to sacrifice, his own personal interests, remain in chains, and be bereft of comfort, liberty, and, if necessary, life itself, rather than have "the dignity and safety of the State" endangered.

It is curious to notice the state of feeling which arose between him and his captors. When they first seized him, they were all, without doubt, filled with the bitterest prejudice and hatred towards him. Some were disposed to savage brutality. He had long been the object of their most violent animosity, as the representative of the government against which they were in rebellion, as their most formidable opponent, and especially for having personally aided in the apprehension of their leader, and sending him to prison, where he still lay. Occasionally, during the first day or two, there were expressions of such feelings, and once, at least, an outbreak of even murderous passion towards him. But soon a change came over their sentiments. These rough and fierce outlaws became kind, respectful, and even tender in their treatment of him and demeanor towards him. The uncomplaining readiness with which he met his condition, the hardihood with which he endured privation, his firmness, patience, and all manly traits of character, insensibly but constantly wrought upon them.

A similar change took place in him. At the time, all the while, and ever after, he expressed his abhorrence of

their crime, in breaking into the recesses of his dwelling at midnight, armed and with blackened faces, ordering him out of his bed, pinioning his arms, hurrying him into the woods, and continuing for weeks such an outrage upon his person and liberty. But he became convinced that they were the victims of ignorance, delusion, and influence : led by others who had acquired entire control over their sentiments and actions ; and therefore, to some extent, to be regarded with pity and charity, as misguided, rather than wicked, men. He evidently took pleasure in recording their acts of civility and kindness toward him, when their own better feelings were brought into operation ; and was willing to pardon them, and, if found consistent with the public good, to have them pardoned by the authorities.

The instance illustrates in general the motives and influences that sway and modify human nature, but especially a prominent characteristic of Colonel Pickering through life. No man was ever less a demagogue ; but he loved the people, the common people, even those of the roughest caste. He never had a particle of pride. He never paid or affected homage to what is called "greatness." He recognized and felt the brotherhood of all mankind. He kept his heart for ever in sympathy with all inferior to him in position and culture. He honored merit alone, and equally in all conditions. This was deeply rooted among his convictions of truth and duty, and was manifest to all in his actions, language, and manners. He discerned, and responded to, what was commendable, even in the most forbidding forms of humanity. Hence, not only the wild backwoods-men of Wyoming, ruffians to him, as they had been beguiled

to be, but all of what are considered the rudest and lowest classes of the community, laborers and dependants of all sorts, when brought into contact with him, were invariably drawn towards him in confidence and attachment.

The historical painter, only so far using the license of an artist as to suppose that the package for which Colonel Pickering sent had reached him while still held in fetters in the woods, can hardly find a more striking subject for his pencil than the Roman Puritan chained to a tree in the deep forest, his armed captors sentinels around him, and he sitting on the ground or on some fallen trunk, in his fustian jacket, reading "Price's Sermons."

A few weeks after returning to his family, Colonel Pickering wrote a letter to his brother, giving an account of his abduction. It corresponds fully with the narrative prepared in 1818. After speaking of John Franklin in the severest terms, he says of him, that he "is possessed of some art, and of bravery to desperation. He had signalized himself in defending the country against the invasions of the Indians in the late war, and had taken the lead of the settlement since the peace. And the dangerous insurrection in Massachusetts, under Shays, will convince you how much mischief may be done by one desperate man and a few assistants in a united and well-ordered government, as was that of Massachusetts; and that it must be infinitely easier for a similar character to raise a tumult in this county. A few days before Franklin was apprehended, he had the desperate boldness to send orders in writing (in which he styled himself Colonel-Commandant) to his adherents, to assemble on the 9th of October last, with arms and ammunition,

at a certain place, for there, says he, "the Pennsylvania Loyalists are to hold an election of militia officers, *which we are determined to prevent.*"

In this letter to his brother, he further says: "The ruffians who lately seized me were fifteen in number, thirteen of them painted like savages. Five others joined them after they had carried me thirty miles up the river. But they found themselves deserted by their principals, the men who had drawn them into the commission of this act of violence."

He avers that persons under the influence of Franklin, instigated by the Connecticut Company, "have been the instruments of all the outrages which have been committed since I have been here. The late act of violence upon me, however, seems to have sickened them. Those of the party actually engaged who have not been taken or killed, are dispersed and have fled, and are flying in different directions, out of the State."

Among his manuscripts, Vol. lviii., No. 45, is a very curious and characteristic document, — a journal covering the period of his captivity, on a quarter of a sheet of post paper, written in so small a hand that it is very difficult to decipher. The following is a copy made out by his son, Octavius. It was written, as stated (*Jovis*), in the open air, and while in the woods. Even there, as ever, he was on the search for information as to agricultural matters, and, no doubt, his captors were flattered and conciliated by his seeking and receiving it from them. This document, from its intrinsic interest, is worthy of preservation; but it is given to the reader of this Biography for an additional and special reason. Colonel Pickering's vast accumulation of manuscripts

filled many large chests. From his frequent change of residence, they remained thus stowed away. As he was for so much of his time absent from home, and so occupied with out of door labors when there, he never had leisure or opportunity to arrange them, and, not being able to refer to them readily, did not often attempt it. It is quite certain that, in preparing the account of his Wyoming adventures for his son Henry, in 1818, he made no use of the following journal, or of his letter to his wife while in captivity. The narrative drawn up in 1818 was almost wholly from memory. A comparison of it with these two original papers, written at the time, demonstrates the remarkable accuracy of his reminiscences, even to the minutest details, and thus justifies the highest confidence in the reliability of his statements, as to the events and personal experiences described or referred to by him, in extracts from his letters or other documents written long subsequent to them, scattered through these volumes : —

“ *Jovis*, 26th of June, '88. Travelling all night, and Friday, late P.M., reached Earl's, above Tunkhannock. Friday night in the woods. Saturday, travelled two and a half hours, and pitched in the woods. Sunday 29th, 30th, and July 1st [T.] marched two or three hours; lay in the woods; open air. Wednesday 2d, marched one hour, and pitched in woods; 3d, *ibid.*, received pen, ink, paper, to write to my wife. Keepers said they had *orders* to supply me for that purpose, or to write to Philadelphia, if I chose. Wrote to my wife for camlet cloak, two pairs worsted hose, one shirt, one pocket-handkerchief, one towel, needle, thread, yarn, leather gloves, four yards yellow binding, a bag, half pound soap, one pound sugar, half-quire paper, shoes, two quills, penknife, Doctor Price's Sermons, fine comb. 4th July, *ibid.*, the Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence! the birthday of American

freedom! All America rejoicing, but I am in chains!!! It began to rain this morning, and is likely to continue all day. Covered our bush roof with bark, which kept dry. P.M., fair. B. Earl, about noon, went to get provisions, and returned without any. He informed that he called at E. Tyler's, when Mrs. Tyler told him the High-Sheriff, with Doctor Hopkins and about eighteen men, had met with three of the boys, and exchanged some shots, in which Gideon Dudley was wounded in the hand, and had his rifle-stock split in pieces, and William Ross was shot through the body, and fell, and was carried into Wigton's. The engagement at Mishoppen Creek with Gideon Dudley, John Whitcomb, and William Phelps" [it was Noah Phelps]. "Saturday, July 5th, fair morn. T. Kilborn returned from Tyler's; says Mr. Ross was taken down in a canoe for Wilkesbarre, but was not expected to live to reach that place.

" D. Taylor says that sows should be very moderately fed after pigging the first week, or they will get cloyed, and not eat well, and their pigs will never get fat. Oxen continue to grow till six or seven years old,—often worked in Connecticut till twelve years old. They plough among corn with oxen, but with a long yoke, and the staple not in the middle, so as better to avoid hurting the corn with the chain. No driver necessary when oxen are well broken. Price of an ox-cart complete in Connecticut, £5 lawful money. He says heifers often have their first calves at two years old,—but then go farrow the next year.

"July 5th, P.M.—Small showers. Left our camp, and marched near Tyler's, across the river, and lay in the woods.

"Sunday, July 6.—This morning wrote to Mrs. Pickering, dating it July 3d, the other of that date having been detained by the party, some of whom excepted to some expressions in it. Had plenty of milk brought me for my breakfast. Then marched into the woods four or five miles, and encamped by a fine spring near Little Mehoopenny Creek, and not far from the middle one of three wild meadows. A.M., fair; P.M., towards evening, thunder with considerable rain. Monday, July 7th, fair. Moved our camp a mile northerly. P.M., towards evening, thunder with showers. Tuesday, July 8th,

fair; P.M., thunder with some rain. Shifted our quarters, and marched back near to the river, within a mile of Kilborn's; received thence milk for supper. Wednesday, July 9th, cloudy (sent a large wooden spoon and butter-spoon to Kilborn's, to be sent thence to my wife), rain in the forenoon. P. M., fair, and then rain; milk for supper. No meat to-day. Thursday, July 10th, rain before daylight. Gave Woodward a letter, dated yesterday, to forward to my wife. Desired her to send me a small tin kettle with a cover. Woodward returned; says my things are at Marcy's, with a letter for me. After the morning, fair and pleasant, T. Kilborn showed me the twig of a tree, whose bark is a very agreeable bitter. He says there are many large trees of it on the flat by his father's, and that they have used it in timber for part of Sill's house-frame, — a soft wood: it is called *winter bark*. No meat; but butter to eat with bread; ginseng at our encampment, in the deep shades of hemlock woods. Query, if cultivated, whether it might not be under the shade of trees in an orchard or garden. The flowers come out of the stem at the centre of three branches, as the May apple does where the stem branches, the buds now just opening. Each branch has five leaves, three of them of a size, the other two not half so large. Woodward brought me a letter, dated the 8th, from Mr. Bowman, informing of the health of the family, and that the articles I requested are sent to Marcy's.

“Friday, July 11th, fair. Moved our camp about four miles from the river, west of Kilborn's, and about a mile over Mehoo-penny Creek. Pork to-day, and what the guard call *coffee*, — *i.e.*, a crust of wheat-bread toasted very brown, not burnt, and then boiled in water, which is then sweetened. 'Tis very tolerable drink. Woodward has been in Vermont and western parts of Massachusetts, where are beech and hemlock woods. He says they find the hemlock land the strongest. That, in Massachusetts, such land produces flax fifteen inches taller than any he has seen on the flats of Wyoming, but that the same land was too cold for Indian-corn, but excellent for grass and wheat. That, in Vermont, the practice is, when you hire to get an acre cut down (except ten trees which, being largest, are only girded), and cut into lengths, the biggest

sixteen, the smaller ones eighteen or twenty feet lengths, and the limbs all lopped off, for four or five dollars. That is done as soon as may be after planting. That the whole lies in this condition a year, and then, in time for sowing winter wheat, fire is put to it, which consumes all the limbs, and then the logs are hauled into heaps with one yoke of oxen, and burnt; then the wheat is sowed and harrowed in. The crop, twenty to twenty-five bushels an acre. Hemlock (he says), after laying thus to dry one year, burns up much cleaner than beech and maple. Fences made with logs, or the young hemlock cut into lengths, and piled into a worm. (Query, if these round rails would not last much longer if stripped of their bark.)

“Saturday, July 12th. Fair, with wind. Winter-green tea last evening with supper, and this morning with breakfast. P.M., thunder with rain, then fair. Two meals to-day.

“Sunday, July 13th. Cloudy, with intervening sunshine. P.M., rainy; no bread or meat, and, of course, eat nothing till bread arrived about one or two P.M. Learn that Mr. Kilborn stays at Wyoming, and the Sill’s house-frame and timber are rafted down for him to finish there. Tim said, a day or two since, that he heard his dad had turned State’s evidence.”*

“Monday, July 14th. Fair.

“Tuesday, July 15th. Fair.”

It may well be imagined that great indignation was everywhere felt at the outrage upon Colonel Pickering, and universal relief experienced on hearing of his safety and return to his family. Letters were written by friends from all quarters, of which the following extract from Henry Prinker, a leading Quaker in Philadelphia, may serve as a specimen:—

“14th 8 Mo., 1788.

“ESTEEMED FRIEND,

“As I felt much sympathy and real concern on hearing of thy being so cruelly torn and separated from thy family and

* Timothy Kilborn, son of Joseph Kilborn, was one of the gang that abducted Colonel Pickering and held him in captivity.

tender connections ; so I may, with much sincerity, congratulate thee and them on thy safe return after a time of such severe trial ; thy delivery and releasement having been to myself and, I believe, to many others, occasion of much rejoicing.”

Upon hearing of his seizure and captivity, the Council of Pennsylvania ordered out the militia to scour the country in pursuit of the banditti, and to rescue their prisoner.

The following proclamation was issued in the German as well as the English language : —

(*State Seal.*)

“ PENNSYLVANIA, ss.

By the VICE-PRESIDENT and the SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

A P R O C L A M A T I O N.

WHEREAS by depositions taken according to law, it appears that several evil-disposed persons have conspired to obstruct the execution of the laws in the County of Luzerne, and have violently seized and carried off the person of Timothy Pickering, Esquire, an officer of government, whom they still retain as a prisoner : — AND WHEREAS it is of great importance to the good people of this Commonwealth that such heinous offenders should be brought to condign punishment : — WE have thought fit to offer, and do hereby offer, a Public Reward of THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS for apprehending and securing *John Jenkins* ; THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS, for apprehending and securing *John Hyde*, and the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS, for apprehending and securing each and every of the following named persons, viz. : — *Daniel Earl, Benjamin Earl, — Cady, Wilkes Jenkins, Joseph Dudley, Gideon Dudley, David Woodward, John Whitcomb, Timothy Kilburne, and Thomas Kinney* ; or for apprehending and securing any other persons who shall be convicted of aiding and assisting in taking off the said Timothy Pickering — the

reward for apprehending and securing any of the above-named persons will be paid on their being delivered to the jail of the County of Northampton :— And all Judges, Justices, Sheriffs, and Constables are hereby strictly enjoined and required to make diligent search and enquiry after, and to use their utmost endeavors to apprehend and secure the said offenders, so that they may be dealt with according to law.

“ GIVEN in Council, under the hand of the Honorable PETER MUHLENBERG, Esquire, Vice-President, and the Seal of the State, at Philadelphia, this eighth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight.

“ PETER MUHLENBERG.

‘ ATTEST CHARLES BIDDLE, *Secretary*.’

The Council also addressed, through the Vice-President, who, by the then existing Constitution of that State, was its Chief Executive Magistrate, the Delegates of Pennsylvania in Congress, then in session at New York, asking for troops in aid of the militia. When, however, the rioters were apprehended or dispersed, their President, by order of the Council, made the following communication to Congress :—

“ In Council, PHILADELPHIA, August 6th, 1788.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ By direction of the board, I have the honor to inform you, that we have this morning, by express, received letters from Colonel Pickering and the other officers of government in the county of Luzerne. From these it appears that matters have taken a more favorable turn than was at first apprehended. Colonel Pickering was liberated by the insurgents on the 16th of July, and the men who carried him off, are now by their petition praying Council to grant them a pardon. The proclamation issued by the board has produced the desired effect. Two of the rioters are now confined in Easton jail, and some others in that of Luzerne. Several have been wounded, and

Dudley, one of the most notorious, died in Luzerne jail of the wounds he received. Those of the rioters who still remain are dispersed, and seeking refuge on the lakes.

“From this change of affairs, and the accounts from the western waters, which seem to indicate that the troops of the Union will be wanted in that quarter, as well as from the shortness of the time limited, for which the troops can possibly be spared, and the consideration that the chief end for which the application was made is already answered, the board are induced to request you will be pleased to inform the honorable the Congress of the United States, that we gratefully acknowledge the favor conferred on this State, by so readily granting the assistance requested. But as the emergency has ceased, and as the State will now have time to act deliberately, and as circumstances shall in future direct, we further request that the troops of the Union may now be directed to continue their route, agreeably to their first destination. The board have, in the mean time, directed a Commissary to proceed to Easton, to provide for the subsistence of the troops until further orders.”

This communication was addressed to “the Honorable the Delegates of Pennsylvania, in Congress at New York, August 12th, 1788.” That body disposed of it as follows: “Ordered that the above letter be referred to the Secretary of War, to take order.”

This may be considered as an official announcement that law and order were permanently established in Wyoming. That beautiful valley had been for thirty years the theatre of most extraordinary conflicts, sufferings, wrongs, and outrages, such as were never experienced in any other part of America. The abduction of Colonel Pickering closed the scene. From the hour of his restoration, peace and prosperity have reigned there.

The abductors of Colonel Pickering, who had not fled

from the country, were arrested, tried, convicted, and sentenced to fine and imprisonment. The depositions of witnesses, and the papers belonging to the several cases, are very numerous. As the men were all poor, fines were with difficulty collected. But, as they had committed no outrages upon the person of their captive, except as connected with the circumstances of his original seizure, depriving him of his liberty, and placing him in bonds and fetters, which they did with painful reluctance, in obedience, as they said, to their "great men;" as their general treatment of him had been civil and kind; and as they acknowledged their offence with penitential petitions for pardon; but chiefly, because the insurgent element had become eradicated in the county, — after suffering imprisonment in jail for greater or less periods of time, they were all ultimately discharged, or suffered to escape.

Colonel Pickering draughted petitions for these men, which they severally signed, to the Supreme Executive Council, praying for pardon, deeply deploring the unlawful and riotous acts to which they had been led by persons "in whose judgment and advice they had been wont to place an entire confidence." They expressed "heartfelt repentance," and solemnly promised "their future fidelity to the State." These petitions he forwarded to the government.

The story he told of his seizure and captivity, and of the unhappy disorders of which he was the victim, in his letter to his son in 1818, contained two more passages in addition to those already presented.

One is as follows: —

"THE SEQUEL.

"Without waiting the result of their petition to the Executive Council, most of the actual perpetrators of the outrage upon me fled to the northward, to escape into the State of New York. On their way as they reached Wysock's Creek, they encountered a party of militia under the command of Captain Roswell Franklin, and exchanged some shots. Joseph Dudley was very badly wounded. The others escaped. Dudley was put into a canoe, and brought down to Wilkesbarre, a distance of perhaps sixty or seventy miles. The doctor who was sent for had no medicine. I had a small box of medicines which had been put up under the care of my good friend Doctor Rush. Of these, upon the application of the physician, I furnished all he desired. But Dudley survived only two or three days. On his death, his friends sent to your mother to beg a winding sheet, which she gave them.

"In the autumn, a court of oyer and terminer was held at Wilkesbarre, by M'Kean, Chief Justice, and Judge Rush. A number of the villains had been arrested; were tried and convicted; fined and imprisoned in different sums, and for different lengths of time, according to the aggravations of their offence. The poor creatures had no money to pay their fines, and the new jail at Wilkesbarre was so insufficient, that all of them made their escape, excepting Stephen Jenkins, brother to Major John Jenkins. Stephen was not in arms with the party; but was concerned in the plot. He might have escaped from jail with the others, but chose to stay; and in consequence received a pardon, after about two months' confinement.

"The fate of Captain Roswell Franklin, a worthy man whom I have mentioned on the preceding page, I sincerely commiserated. Wearied with the disorders and uncertain state of things at Wyoming, he removed with his family into the State of New York, and sat down on a piece of land to which he had no title. Others had done the same. The country was new, and without inhabitants. They cleared land and raised crops, to subsist their families and stock. In

two or three years, when all their crops were harvested, their hay and grain in stack, and they anticipated passing the approaching winter comfortably, Governor George Clinton sent orders to the sheriff of the nearest county, to raise the militia, and to drive off the untitled occupants. These orders were as severely as promptly executed; and the houses and crops all burnt. Reduced to despair, Captain Franklin shot himself. This, as well as I recollect, was in the autumn of 1792.*

“Governor Clinton was distinguished for energy of character. Had like prompt and decisive measures been taken at the beginning, with the Connecticut settlers at Wyoming, it would have been happy for them and for Pennsylvania; the actual sufferers would have been few in number; but the unstable, and generally feeble, measures of that government, instead of intimidating, rather encouraged hardy men, destitute of property, to become intruders; and thus, eventually, a great many families were involved in calamities.

“John Franklin, so often mentioned, having been indicted on the charge of treason, for which he had been arrested, remained a good while in jail. At length he was liberated on giving bonds, with a large penalty. And finally, all opposition to the government in Luzerne County ceasing, he was fully discharged. The people of the county afterwards chose him to represent them in the State legislature, where, in the House of Representatives, he sat, I believe, for several years. During this period, chance, once or twice, threw him in my way. He was very civil, and I returned his civilities.”

The conclusion of the letter is entitled, “Doings of the Pennsylvania Legislature.” He commences thus,

* The sympathy felt by the people of the neighborhood in the hard fate of Captain Roswell Franklin, his sufferings and misfortunes, and the regard and affection in which they had held him through life, led to a demonstration of respect at his funeral, of which an account has been preserved. This has led some to doubt whether he put an end to his life by his own hand. But Colonel Pickering, from his particular acquaintance and opportunities to know the facts, could not have been mistaken. The honors paid to the memory of Captain Franklin were prompted by feelings which, all things considered, were not impaired, but rather heightened, by the manner of his death.

“While I was in exile in Philadelphia, in consequence of the first insurrection, in October, 1787, I was advertised of a meeting of Pennsylvania claimants, and requested to be present. The number assembled did not exceed ten or twelve.” He goes on to state that a certain “elderly Presbyterian clergyman,” “was one of the number, and the most zealous for petitioning the legislature, then in session, to repeal the confirming law. The gentlemen in general appeared to be opposed to that step; and some of them observed, that the faith of the State being pledged, its honor required an adherence to the provisions of the confirming law.” “What care I for the *honor* of the State? I want my money,” was, Colonel Pickering affirms, the precise language of the “Reverend Doctor.” He mentions another eminent clerical gentleman, of the Episcopal Church, who manifested a similar spirit. They were both, he says, men of talents. “I believe,” he continues, “that but for these two reverend gentlemen teasing and intriguing with members of the legislature, the confirming law might have been carried into execution. A few other persons united with them, probably at their solicitation.”

He closes his letter with the following statements and considerations:—

“The legislature, in the first instance, only *suspended the execution of the law*. But the next year (1788) * after the enormous outrage committed against me,—the expected effect of which, as contemplated by the Susquehanna Company and its partisans, was defeated by my patience and perseverance,—and the spirit of opposition to the government of

* Colonel Pickering's memory was at fault, as to this date. A movement was made on the occasion, and at the time he mentions, to that end; but the repealing act did not pass until 1790.

Pennsylvania appeared to be extinguished ; when, in a word, they thought they should hazard nothing by the measure, — *the legislature repealed the confirming law*. This always appeared to me unjust and cruel. If *any*, certainly a *very small* number, of the Connecticut claimants whose cases were within the purview of the confirming law, participated in the insurrection and outrage described in the preceding pages. In the latter affair, the evidence amounted to demonstration ; for the offenders met with no support ; and skulked about for twenty days to avoid detection ; and then, releasing me, fled generally from the State. The Susquehanna Company, who contrived or adopted the plot, expected to ferret me out of the county ; presuming that I, wearied out by opposition and cruel treatment, should *haul up stakes*, and abandon the county to its fate ; when, the rallying point of all the well-disposed being removed, they might recur to their old measures with a good prospect of eventual success. But their plot having been completely defeated, they appeared to have wholly abandoned their cause in despair. The repeal of the confirming law raised them from the dust. The Company, the Old Settlers, and the Half-share men, alike stripped of title and of hope, would naturally make common cause. The courts and order of the county were, however, maintained. And although one suit was brought by a Pennsylvania claimant against an old Connecticut settler, and judgment, in a court of the United States, was given in favor of the plaintiff ; yet the Connecticut settlers kept possession of their farms : *they were too numerous to be removed, and driven, as vagabonds, upon the wide world*. The magnitude of the evil became more sensible ; and at length the legislature yielded to *expediency* what they had denied to the demands of *equity*. They passed a law to secure the Connecticut settlers in their possessions, upon their paying some small prices (not a twentieth part of the intrinsic value) for their lands, varied according to their qualities. Thus the controversy was ended, but infinitely to the loss of Pennsylvania.

“ Not only the Susquehanna Company, but the Delaware Company, which had long been apparently extinct, raised their heads, encouraged settlers to go in, surveyed lands, and sold

them for what they could get to desperate adventurers. In this disordered state of the country, emigrants of character and property changed their course, and entered into the State of New York, where new lands immediately rose in price, up to three, four, and five dollars an acre ; at the same time that like lands in Luzerne County, and eastward as far as the Delaware, and lands, too, nearer to a market, would not bring a dollar. Indeed it was difficult to sell at any rate. But for this miserable conduct of the Pennsylvania legislature, the whole country between the Delaware and the Susquehanna, being nearer at hand to eastern emigrants, and more easily accessible than the New York lands, would have long since been changed from a wilderness to cultivated farms, and the population of Pennsylvania been increased, by this time, to thirty or forty thousand inhabitants beyond her present number.

“ The stream once turned and flowing, it was not easy to divert its course after tranquillity was restored. And now, since new worlds of fertile lands have been opened at the westward, comparatively few eastern emigrants stop on this side of the Ohio. But for the vacillating measures of the Pennsylvania legislatures, some thousands of the emigrants from Connecticut to its Western Reserve, would now have been industrious inhabitants of that State.

“ TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“ WENHAM, December 31st, 1818.”

The Honorable Charles Miner, in concluding this portion of his History of Wyoming, says :—

“ Christmas of 1788, found Luzerne abounding in the necessities of life ; the laws of Pennsylvania in perfect operation, receiving everywhere cheerful obedience. Franklin at liberty. Colonel Pickering in his office, issuing writs or recording deeds, with the same devoted industry that characterized the performance of every other duty, high or low, allotted to him in life ; a most extraordinary man, in whom were combined those rare attributes, of wisdom to devise measures, decision to resolve on their execution, energy to carry them through, — the whole tempered by consummate prudence, and perfect

integrity, tinged nevertheless by a degree of prejudice that occasionally misled him ; yet ever commanding the respect of friend and enemy. Indeed, perhaps, he was the only man who could have introduced the laws, and averted the calamity of a new and more disastrous civil war in Wyoming."

The portion of Colonel Pickering's biography from his first entertaining the idea of settling in the Wyoming valley, and superintending the organization of the county of Luzerne, to this point, presents scenes, incidents, conditions and modes of life, and personal experiences, entirely remote from the ordinary track of distinguished public men. What remains of his history has an interest in common with that which invests all eminent characters and examples ; and will bring him to view in a career of honor and usefulness, diversified, elevated, and prolonged, to an extraordinary degree.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mrs. Pickering's Visit to Salem. — Correspondence with William Bingham. — A Member of the Convention for Framing a New Constitution for the State of Pennsylvania. — Visit to Charles Thomson. — Unsuccessful Applicant for Office.

1788, 1789.

IN the letter to his brother of August 4th, 1788, from Wilkesbarre, quoted in the preceding chapter, Colonel Pickering says : —

“ My friend, Mr. Hodgdon, is now here ; to-morrow he is to start off for Philadelphia, accompanied by my wife, who will probably remain there two months. The repeated disturbances here have strongly affected her, as you may imagine ; and this relaxation of a visit among her Philadelphia friends will probably be of much service to her.”

A Salem vessel being at Philadelphia, while Mrs. Pickering was there, it occurred to her and her friends that a brief visit to Massachusetts might be conveniently made, and that a sea-voyage would be beneficial. It was concluded, in concurrence with the opinion of her husband, that the favorable opportunity ought not to be lost. The following is from a letter to him : —

“ PHILADELPHIA, August 22d, 1788.

“ MY DEAR,

“ To-morrow I expect to leave this city for Salem, where I promise myself great pleasure in the company of our friends. I feel more anxious to see John than before I left home, but am not so much engrossed with the idea as to be unmindful of the little fellows with you. They all have a place in my memory, but Edward occupies it most.

“Captain Needham has not been able to obtain freight, which circumstance is in my favor, as the present prospect of the weather promises a short and good passage. It would be more agreeable if any female were going with me. At present I know of no passenger but myself. The captain and mate bear excellent characters. The Major intends to set out for Carlisle next Sunday. He postponed his journey a few days, that he might see me on board. He and Mrs. Hastings have procured every necessary to make me comfortable during the passage. It is probable I may return in the same vessel, in four or five weeks, when I hope to meet you here. I am in great expectation of Mr. Horton’s arrival, that I may hear from you again before I go. Your friends and acquaintances here are exceedingly interested in your situation ; and wish government to pursue such measures as will secure the peace and safety of the family, and the interests and happiness of the State.

“It is a week to-day since William George set out for Wilkesbarre. I hope he has got safe there. We have had very heavy rains since. I think the creeks must be affected by them.

“I recollect nothing particular to mention. Give my love to Betsey, and kiss the boys for me.

“I am, with unalterable affection, sincerely yours,

“REBECCA PICKERING.”

She reached Salem after a short and pleasant passage, and spent about six weeks in visits to different branches of the family. The occasion was one of great enjoyment to them all. For nearly ten years she had been far away ; and it may well be believed that the story of her experiences was listened to with the deepest interest, — covering a life in immediate connection with headquarters, much of the time from the close of 1778 to the end of the Revolutionary war, in the military family of Washington ; afterwards several years in Philadelphia, conversant with the highest and best circles

of society, intimately acquainted with the distinguished persons then adorning that always cultivated and enlightened community ; and, finally, her privations, trials, and suffering in the woods, and worse than war, of Wyoming.

Her health and spirits were quite renovated by this brief sojourn in Massachusetts. Severe weather on the return passage seems, however, to have again prostrated her. On a half-sheet of paper are found, in her handwriting, hurried minutes of a storm, destructive to much shipping, but from which the vessel she was in was fortunately preserved. It seems that it was a week before she had cleared Cape Cod.

“Monday, P.M. Left Salem October 6th ; arrived at Cape Cod harbor and anchored. Left the Cape Thursday morning, and reached Chatham harbor on Friday evening ; crossed a very dangerous bar to get in. It began to rain in the night, and continued to all day Saturday, accompanied with very hard wind. From the appearance of the weather in the harbor, it was concluded by the Captain to be a severe storm at sea. It blew so hard in the harbor that a number of vessels broke from their moorings and drove ashore. One drove so close upon us that it alarmed our ship’s company. They were afraid ours would be stove to pieces or driven on shore.

“Sunday, October 12th. I never was witness to such a scene as this morning exhibited to my view. Vessels driven on shore on every side.”

Colonel Pickering, writing to his brother from Philadelphia, October 29th, says : —

“My wife arrived here on Tuesday, the 21st, very much indisposed ; but she is much better now, which enables us to set off to-day for Wyoming.”

Writing, November 15th, to Major Hodgdon, he says : —

“I have the pleasure to inform you that my wife has perfectly recovered, and that the whole family are well.”

Peace being at last established in his country, and health in his household, he found happiness in his favorite pursuit of it: in the labors of husbandry and improvements on his farm; variegated by the discharge of the duties of his civil and judicial offices, by correspondence with friends, and by visits to Philadelphia, from time to time, to urge the slow and reluctant Assembly to efficient measures for the settlement of all questions relating to land-titles in Wyoming. In following the current of his history, he and others connected with him will, so far as the means are afforded, speak for themselves, as living witnesses, in letters and documents, written at the time, or citations from them.

He was often called by public business to Philadelphia, and generally travelled on horseback. In a letter to his wife, dated “At Learn’s, Wednesday morning, April 1st, 1789,” he says: —

“We got to Tobyhanna last night with difficulty, and slept, with our horses, in Luce’s old hut. It was very well we brought provisions with us, as there was nothing to eat in the house. Luce was gone with his brother for provisions. This morning we came to Learn’s to breakfast; the road altogether much better than I expected, and the creeks were not high. It began to snow before day, and snowed all the way to Learn’s; but now ’tis fair weather. I rode with more ease than I expected, and am better than I was.”

His correspondence often relates to the most important subjects, shedding much light upon the history of the government, and upon the development of the mechanical and manufacturing, as well as agricultural, interests of the country.

William Bingham was one of the most distinguished citizens of Philadelphia and public men of Pennsylvania. The following letters passed between him and Colonel Pickering:—

“PHILADELPHIA, April 9th, 1789.

“WILLIAM BINGHAM, Esq.

“SIR,

“You desired me to give you in writing what I had to communicate relative to the manufacturing of iron in Luzerne County. I can only inform you of the situation of the ore, the conveniency of the necessary materials for refining, &c., and the probable demand for bar-iron, castings, and manufactures of iron.

“The ore is about eight miles below Wilkesbarre, and within a short distance of the Susquehanna, — perhaps half a mile or a mile from it. It is close by the creek, where a bloomery has just been erected and set to work; and I have been informed, by those who have viewed it, but a quarter of a mile from the bloomery, to which it may be brought down the mill-pond in canoes, or any cheap flat boats. The adjacent lands have a sufficiency of wood for charcoal; and if these should fail in time, the river will enable the proprietors to obtain, for ages, a full and cheap supply of wood or coal. And it is not improbable that the stone coal, with which the country abounds, may be applied to the same use, according to the late invention we have heard of in England. But in whatever way refined iron shall be obtained, the manufacturing of it into all kinds of tools and other articles, necessary and convenient for the country, may be effected with singular advantage; for many of our hills are full of strong stone coal, and there is a large body of it joining the dam where the bloomery is erected. The stream of water there, I apprehend, is sufficient for a furnace and a forge at the same time. And below the present forge there is a saw-mill, and a grist mill may be erected by the side of it.

“The ore, I am assured, is in great abundance. 'Tis bog ore which is constantly renewing. 'Tis of a rich quality, and the iron made of it at the bloomery is almost equal to any refined iron. It appears to me highly probable that it will

make excellent steel; and a steel furnace may, in proper time, be erected for converting it.

“The demand for castings, for bar-iron; for manufactures, particularly axes, hoes, grubbing hoes, shovels, spades, scythes, chains, ploughshares, nails, and various other articles, — will be considerable at the present time, and will increase rapidly with the extending population of the countries watered by the east and west branches of the Susquehanna, and of the neighboring State of New York, to which multitudes of the New England people are now preparing to emigrate. But besides the countries beyond the Blue Mountain, much of this State below it may be supplied from Luzerne, at cheaper rates than from any other iron works in Pennsylvania. When the latest road surveyed shall be opened, the distance from the iron works to Easton will be but about sixty miles. During the winter there is commonly two months of good sleighing, when iron manufactures may be carried to Easton at a moderate expense, and thence, in the spring, by water to this city. Even at this time Northampton County, and the adjacent parts of Bucks, might be supplied from Luzerne as cheaply as from any iron works in the State, for at Durham they make only castings.

“I mentioned the west branch of the Susquehanna. At present, the inhabitants there get iron from Middletown and Harrisburg, to which places, I believe, ’tis brought from Gimblet’s works. Now ’tis upwards of sixty miles from Middletown to Sunbury and Northumberland, *against* the stream. But from the Luzerne bloomery, ’tis little more than fifty miles *down* the stream. From Northumberland, the whole of the west branch will certainly be supplied.

“From this view of the matter, you will be able to judge whether the erecting of a furnace, and eventually other iron works in Luzerne, merits your attention. On what terms an interest in, or the whole property of, the ore, stream, and adjacent lands could be obtained, I know not; but the present proprietors are poor men. Their title is only that derived from Connecticut; and before any capital works should be erected, it would be proper to purchase the Pennsylvania title to the same tracts. Had I the means, I should engage in the

measure without delay : as it is, I wish to form a connection, on some terms, with those who have.

“Yours, &c.,

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

“PHILADELPHIA, April 14th, 1789.

“T. PICKERING, Esq.

“Sir,

“I received and have considered your letter of the 9th instant.

“It appears that the iron-ore is well situated, and may be worked to considerable advantage, and that the surrounding country affords a market (which will be continually increasing) for large quantities of this article.

“But the most essential object is to know on what terms the property could be purchased, and whether the title is indisputable.

“On your return to Luzerne, you can be made acquainted with these circumstances, and I will, immediately on being informed of them, determine whether I will effect the purchase, and on what footing.

“When once possessed of the property, eventual measures may be taken for turning it to the best account.

“I am, Sir, &c.,

“WILLIAM BINGHAM.”

It is quite evident from the expressions and tenor of his letter that Mr. Bingham was very favorably inclined to obtain possession of a large territory in the county of Luzerne, and that the only real obstacle was in the titles ; for that fatally involved the question of price. The lands were all and severally claimed by adverse parties. The heated and prolonged struggle had made them both obstinate, tenacious, and confident. Neither was willing to sell for less than the whole of what the property was then supposed to be worth. Each insisted upon holding on to their respective estimates ; and the result was that no transference of the lands could be effected, except

for double their value ; and Mr. Bingham desisted from further negotiation. The legislature of Pennsylvania, in delaying decisive action, one way or another, as to the confirming law, inflicted an injury upon that State, far greater than was then imagined, and which, indeed, cannot be calculated. Mr. Bingham's family connection with the Barings would have enabled him, had he been allowed to get possession of those lands, to have commanded boundless resources from that quarter, in addition to his own great wealth, in opening the mines of "stone-iron," of which, in wide layers of great depths, the mountains largely consisted. A "Bingham Purchase," on the east branch of the Susquehanna, at that time, instead of, or in addition to, that made of a considerable portion of what was then the District of Maine, would have accelerated the growth of Pennsylvania half a century.

Colonel Pickering's brother-in-law, George Williams, a merchant in Salem, and father of Samuel Williams, long the great American banker in London, was a faithful and generous friend and frequent correspondent. In the letters passing between them, public questions relating to politics, finance, and business matters generally, are often discussed. In one of them, dated September 29th, 1788, Mr. Williams mentions some attempts to manufacture certain articles in Massachusetts at that time, and gives briefly some views that have been remarkably sustained by subsequent experience, and cannot, perhaps, be found earlier expressed.

"At Beverly, a cotton manufactory; at Boston, a duck do., and at Watertown, a small trial of woollens.

"If you should have peace at your place, and you and your

townsmen would raise good flax, water-rotting it, then it will be fit to make duck and twine. The hemp must go down your river. As you have Germans in your State, in time you may find some experienced in manufacturing it. A gentleman has got pieces of English duck for samples, from No. 1 to 8, and carried them to Northampton, for their poor people to spin the warp and filling; and a weaver is wanting, which they are in hopes to find. We in Massachusetts must go on these coarse articles, and, in time, fine ones; which will be a great saving to this country, and *then we shall be a rich people*. It must be done in the country, for the town and city people will not work till they are forced to it. Whenever time will allow you and your neighbors to go into any manufactures that will answer for the Eastern States, and I can be of any service to you, I shall be ready to give you any information, what will answer."

In a postscript of a letter, dated April 15th, 1789, to his brother-in-law, Wingate, then in Congress, Colonel Pickering makes these suggestions:—

"Permit me to add a few words on the style of the public acts of Congress. All the law forms, which I have seen, are burdened and deformed by useless tautologies and repetitions. I should be pleased to see in the Acts of Congress some resemblance to the simplicity of 'Thou shalt not kill,' 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.' The numerous and complex affairs of an extended and commercial people will require a multitude of regulations; still, however, a degree of conciseness and simplicity in the style appears very attainable; and such a style possesses a dignity which is wanting in all the statutes I have ever seen. If a corporation is to be erected, it must be done 'by the *name, style, and title*;' but pray where is the necessity of using more than one of these three words? And why begin every distinct paragraph with 'And be it further enacted by the authority afore-said'? I am disgusted when, in a law, I see such an enumeration as this, 'Horses, mares, geldings, colts, fillies,' bulls, oxen, cows, heifers, steers, calves. Is it not possible to find

comprehensive words that shall supersede such a minute detail? When a naturalist describes a *horse*, nobody imagines that he means *only* the full-grown male of the species. If there be danger of mistake or evasion, would it not be better to declare, in a preliminary act, the force of certain words, to save the continued repetition of so minute an enumeration?"

At this period of his life, Colonel Pickering became much embarrassed in his pecuniary affairs. Before he had been prevailed on by the urgent solicitations of his friends in Philadelphia to settle at Wyoming, representing to him that a great public service would be promoted by his taking the management of the unhappy difficulties there, he had designed to go elsewhere to establish a home for himself and sons, and had disposed of his then available means in purchasing twelve thousand acres of new land in Western Pennsylvania; and, in company with Major Hodgdon, had bought two thousand five hundred acres eighteen miles above Wyoming, and five thousand acres in what was then Western Virginia, now Kentucky, on the south side of the Ohio River, about three miles from Marietta, on the other side. As settlement had not yet reached these lands, they remained unsalable. If he could retain them a few years longer, they would command a price that would afford him the means of providing adequately and permanently for his family. He therefore felt it to be his duty to avoid, if possible, the sacrifice of at least a part of them at a merely nominal price. In the mean time, however, he was becoming more and more straitened in his circumstances, and submitting to increasing privations. In letters to George Williams, urging him to raise money to meet his necessities, by selling off the remnants of his

patrimonial property in Salem, he lays open his situation candidly and fully.

He had consented to encounter the Wyoming enterprise on the pledge of those who were considered as authorized to speak for the government of Pennsylvania, that the titles of the settlers there should be confirmed, and on assurances from the principal lawyers in Philadelphia that the emoluments of the various offices conferred on him in the county of Luzerne could not fail to be considerable. The violation of that pledge by the suspension, which amounted to a virtual repeal, of the confirming law almost as soon as it was enacted, and foreshadowed its actual repeal not long after, rendered his offices valueless.

Writing from Philadelphia to Mr. Williams on the 24th of April, and again on the 24th of November, he makes these statements : —

“ The immediate prospect of selling part of my new lands has failed ; I am now so engaged that my credit is at stake. You will blame me for getting so engaged ; but it was not easy to avoid it. Where I live I have purchased no more land than will make me a decent farm ; and I had reason to expect the means of stocking and improving it. I have been two years and a half engaged in the affairs of Wyoming, during all which time I have received but trifles in all my offices. The fees in those offices would *now* yield me £200 a year ; but *cash* is not to be obtained ; *produce* is the currency of that country ; but I have received as yet, very little of this. Actions in the law in this State are usually four terms (that is, a year) in coming to judgment, and the difficulties of the times render the collection of fees even then, very dilatory. Most of my fees are yet outstanding, so that I have been only *spending*. I beg you to make my brother's mind easy. I have property enough, which, in a few years, with the improvements making by others in the neighbor-

hood of my lands, and the improvements I shall make myself, if my life is spared, will place me in easy circumstances; for, excepting necessary plain clothing for my family and hired men, and a little tea and coffee for the women, I shall henceforward need nothing but what my farm will produce. The truth is that the making a settlement at Wyoming has been vastly more expensive than I expected; and the expenses have been greatly enhanced by the disturbances that have happened. I do not think my fees, altogether, have amounted to fifty dollars in cash. This has arisen chiefly from those disturbances which have prevented the population of the county, hindered improvements among the people already there, delayed the opening of practicable roads to bring their surplus produce to market, and, indeed, prevented their raising a surplus of any consequence. Of course you see the people have as yet had no way to acquire *money*, and consequently have had none for me. At our last September court, I was industriously employed, from Monday morning till Saturday night, in my five offices; and yet, during the whole week, I received but *one quarter of a dollar*, and that from a man who came from another county. Yet there were between forty and fifty actions entered, my fees in which, in the end, will average, at least, as many pounds. Besides this, I did a good deal of business in the Orphans' and Probate Courts, some in the Quarter-Sessions, and received some deeds to record.

“When I reflect on all these untoward circumstances, I feel some satisfaction that I am not now in debt. The truth is, that I have worked hard myself, that my wife and her sister have been alike industrious, and that our clothing and diet have been plain and frugal, such as we had never known before; often, indeed, such as never experienced in my father's house. But we have been resigned to our condition, aiming at making the best of it. We must use yet greater frugality, till my offices shall become more productive; for I would fain preserve my new lands, which will eventually be so valuable, though I must part with a considerable portion of them at a very inferior price, if I cannot otherwise discharge debts that may have to be incurred.”

These passages disclose his situation. The tone of the letters from which they are substantially taken shows that his spirit was not broken by the embarrassments, perplexities, and endurances to which he was subjected. He was indeed, as he elsewhere describes himself, a "poor man," hard-working, living on humble fare; but, as always, patient, cheerful, hopeful, and brave-hearted. Great interest was felt in him everywhere. Besides regret that he should be suffering such trials, there was a general sentiment among those who knew him, or had been led to appreciate his character, that the public service should have the benefit of his talents, energy, and integrity. Among his papers is found a document, dated "Philadelphia, October 26th, 1789," addressed "To his Excellency the President, and the Honorable the Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania," recommending "Timothy Pickering, Esquire," for appointment as "Surveyor-General" of Pennsylvania, possessing "in an eminent degree," and "in all respects," the qualifications for that office. This application was made by no agency of his, although, when apprised of it, he signified that the office would be very agreeable and acceptable. It was given to another. The copy of the paper was probably sent to Colonel Pickering, as a memorial of personal friendship, and of the estimate in which his character and abilities were held by the signers, who were indeed a distinguished body of men, — THOMAS MCKEAN, THOMAS FITZSIMONS, WILLIAM LEWIS, EDWARD SHIPPEN, ROBERT MORRIS, RICHARD PETERS, FREDERICK A. MUHLENBERG, WILLIAM RAWLE, JARED INGERSOLL, JAMES

WILSON, GEORGE CLYMER, THOMAS WILLING, TENCH FRANCIS, SAMUEL POWELL.

Colonel Pickering took an active part in the political operations necessary to put in motion the machinery of the new Federal government, and was in constant correspondence with leading persons in Philadelphia on the subject. At a meeting of a number of gentlemen in that place, belonging to the city and county of Philadelphia; and the counties of Berks, Chester, Lancaster, York, Cumberland, Bucks, Northumberland, Montgomery, Dauphin, and Huntingdon, — it was voted, “that a Conference be held,” on the first Monday of November, 1788, at the borough of Lancaster, to fix on tickets for ten electors, and eight members of the House of Representatives, for the First Congress. The members of Congress, as well as electors, were to be chosen on a general ticket. The day appointed by law for the election of the former was the fourth Monday of November; that for the latter, the first Monday in January, 1789. Each county was to have two delegates in the “Conference,” and Colonel Pickering was relied upon to have Luzerne duly represented.

The “Lancaster ticket” for members of Congress was elected, with two exceptions, the German vote carrying in Muhlenberg and Heister over Allison and Chambers.

Tench Coxe writing to Colonel Pickering, December 17th, 1788, says: —

“I presume you, by this time, know the fate of the Federal cause, at the late election. Six of the Lancaster ticket are carried, and two Germans more than the one who was on that list, which gives us eight safe members for Pennsylvania, none of whom will injure, and some of whom can essentially serve, the Constitution. The jealousy of the country prevented a

gentleman, lately of Massachusetts, from being put in nomination, though no other objection was adduced, and the weight of every argument in his favor admitted."

The circumstance of his having been but a few years a citizen of Pennsylvania was, not long afterwards, again brought to bear against Colonel Pickering.

The Lancaster electoral ticket was also chosen. Writing to Mr. Hodgdon, January 11th, 1789, Colonel Pickering says:—

"The election of electors was better than the last; we had thirty-six votes. The citizens of Philadelphia would hardly travel from five to one hundred miles to attend any election whatever. But the people of this county must do it, or our elections will be small. They know little about the *new government*, and of course felt little interest in elections. Added to the above circumstances, the weather was bad, which prevented many in the neighborhood from assembling."

In a letter to his former mercantile partner, Mr. Hodgdon, he gives a statement of the circumstances which then, January 24th, 1789, made it necessary to draw on him for funds.

"I hope you may have received some moneys due us. If all other sources fail of enabling me to discharge the above and other engagements, which I must fulfil in the spring, I must sell, *at any price*, some of my new lands, or more of my land in Salem—the latter probably—and the payment for it will be certain. I could wish you to see some of the hemp buyers, and make a conditional bargain. My hemp, the dresser says, is good; but it was sown late, and the ground not well enough prepared, so that generally 'tis very short. The quantity I expected was ten hundred-weight, but there may be considerably less. I believe it would suit the spinners of small cords. I have done no more to my house than to divide the rooms above by rough partitions, and fill in the

lower rooms, and the entry-chamber with bricks. I had it in contemplation to finish the house next summer; but I have now determined to postpone it another year, that I may build me a barn, and provide other things essential for me. If I live another year, I hope to be able to remit *produce* for the greater part of the articles I shall want from the city; and when once I can accomplish this, I shall begin to be at ease."

Passages of Colonel Pickering's letters, like the above, are given that the reader may be kept apprised, from time to time, of the difficulties he was encountering, the privations and discomforts to which he was submitting, and the struggles he was manfully making, to provide for the maintenance and welfare of his family. This, it must be borne in mind, through every period of his life, he felt to be a most sacred, and the highest duty of a man. He sought and held office, not from ambition or pride, but from a desire to be useful, and, as he always frankly declared, from consideration of his circumstances, and the necessity he was under of procuring means for the discharge of duty to those dependent upon him.

A new form of national government having been established, and the steps taken to put it in motion, the people of Pennsylvania turned their attention to a change in their State Constitution. A general conviction existed that it had become absolutely necessary. The utter want of energy, and of an intelligent comprehension of the interests of the State, shown in such instances as the imbecile and stupid course of the Assembly in reference to the settlement of land titles in Luzerne County, occasioned angry complaints from suffering parties and wide-spread dissatisfaction. The State was substantially without an executive. The President of

a Council of twenty members bore the semblance of a Governor, and was sometimes spoken of as such. Appointments were made by the Council, voting by secret ballot. Of course there was no responsibility anywhere; and the whole system became the subject of derision, not only by the outside public, but by those in the government itself. A member of the Council, in explanation of some objectionable proceeding, said "what can be expected of the supreme executive Council, when their own Secretary *can neither read nor write?*" That is, as he explained, "he reads so badly, and writes so incorrectly, that he is not called upon to read papers in Council, nor does he even make the minutes of their proceedings. Both of these things are done by some of the members, and the minutes are then fairly entered in the books by the Deputy-Secretary." Such a body naturally got to be considered, as it was called at the time, a mere "excrescence" of government; and the people demanded that it should be "lopped off" by a better system. It has been noticed with what an extremely disrespectful illustration Dr. Rush persisted in expressing his contempt for the then existing Constitution of Pennsylvania, as in the following letter to Colonel Pickering.

"PHILADELPHIA, March 25th, 1789.

"DEAR SIR,

"Colonel Hartley (now in New York) requests that you would write to your friends in the Federal legislature, in favor of the residence of Congress in Philadelphia. Mr. Wingate and Mr. Goodhue are both at present in New York. Many arguments, I have no doubt, will occur to you; but none should be urged more than the necessity and advantages of uniting New England and Pennsylvania in one great system of republican legislation. Ancient prejudices and habits

will for ever prevent such a union taking place between New York and the Eastern States.

“ Mr. Gore will give you a history of the triumphs of reason, liberty, and justice in the proceedings of our Assembly. Nothing now remains to be done to make us a great and happy people, but to change our State Constitution, or, to use the words which once offended Mr. William Montgomery, to *overset our State dung-cart, by means of the new Continental wagon.*

“ You will forward this business by using the utmost industry to obtain signatures to petitions, to the next session of Assembly, to call a Convention. Your friends expect vigor and success from your influence in Luzerne County. The sooner you open your petitions the better, otherwise Mr. Nicholson may have an advantage over you ; for he, it seems, is the dictator-general of the Antifederal party.

“ With compliments to Mrs. Pickering, in which Mrs. Rush joins, I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

“ BENJAMIN RUSH.

“ P. S. The dialogues, receipts, &c., in the almanac, as far as September, are by yours, B. R.”

The “ Mr. Gore ” mentioned by Dr. Rush in the sarcastic passage above, about the “ triumphs of reason,” &c., was Obadiah Gore, Esquire, the Member of Assembly for Luzerne. He had just written to Colonel Pickering that “ all prospects for the present ” of getting any thing done for Luzerne County “ seem to be at an end.”

Of course it was no easy matter to alter the Constitution of the State. It could not be done without the concurrence and co-operation of the existing government. The first indispensable step was a law to be passed by it, calling a Convention of the people for the purpose. Such a law would extinguish the authority of those en-

acting it. To meet the case, petitions were put in circulation in every county, the Chief-Justice prepared an address, and every possible influence was brought to bear. Major Hodgdon, writing to Colonel Pickering, May 7th, 1789, says: "I have forwarded several more papers, and with them the Chief-Justice's address. The business goes on swimmingly here; all ranks sign the petition, but, in Cumberland, the *old hands* have taken the alarm, and are at work." Notwithstanding the resistance attempted to be made by the "old hands," the voice of the people was irresistible. The legislature, overwhelmed by the multitude of petitions, sustained by a vast array of names from all parts of the State, yielded to the pressure, and passed the required law for calling a Convention to frame a new Constitution for Pennsylvania. Rush again writes to Pickering, in jubilant spirits, but still adhering to his favorite simile.

"PHILADELPHIA, September 21st, 1789.

"DEAR SIR,

"The Continental wagon having at last upset our Pennsylvania dung-cart, I take the liberty of concurring with your other city friends in urging you to accept a seat in the Convention. You will be both necessary and useful there. From the present temper of our people, and from the principles of some of the gentlemen who will take a lead in the business, we bid fair to have one of the best governments in the Union.

"I enclose you an ironical composition in favor of Rum. Perhaps it may do good, if read in some of your Wyoming circles. It has been ascribed to yours sincerely, &c."

A few days after the date of this letter, Colonel Pickering set out for Philadelphia, on business connected with his county. On the way, he ranged among the mountains and woods in search of a stray cow, which he

succeeded in finding, and made arrangements to have her driven back to his farm. He then proceeded on his journey. At Lehigh, September 29th, he wrote to his wife : "The bearer, Mr. Ellicott, has handed me a packet of letters, some of which I enclose to you. By Mr. Coxe's and Dr. Rush's, you will see it is wished I may represent Luzerne in the State Convention ; and I wish it myself. The business of altering and amending the Constitution is important. There will be sensible and learned debates, which I shall be pleased to hear, and perhaps I may do some good myself. If it is proposed to the electors by a few of my friends, I presume I shall obtain a majority of votes. I have written a line to Mr. Bowman, about the election to the Convention, and if you please, you may let him read Mr. Coxe's, Dr. Rush's, and Mr. Hodgdon's letters." Again, on the 10th of October, he writes : "I was not unaware that my absence would be inconvenient if I were elected for the Convention. But I believed the session would be short ; and I am persuaded it will be so, for the alterations and amendments of the Constitution will be considered and prepared beforehand by some gentlemen here ; and what they do will bid fair to be adopted. I should be pleased to be a member, because it would ensure *one vote* for amendments, which I deem *so necessary* for the welfare of the State. Perhaps, too, I may be something useful, besides giving my vote." Colonel Pickering was elected to the Convention, although absent from the county at the time, as was the case two years before when chosen to the Convention that ratified, for Pennsylvania, the Constitution of the United States. Writing again to his wife, November 4th, he says : —

“I should have been extremely glad to have seen you and the family before I meet the Convention; but when I considered that only twenty days intervene, and that eight of them would be spent in going and returning, — when I wished to be here before the Convention should meet, to prepare myself for the business, — and seeing Gore and Butler earnestly requested me to stay about the Wyoming lands, which are expected to come before the Assembly, I judged it best to remain here, especially as it is now too late to mend what has been done in my husbandry affairs, or supply what has been omitted. I am grieved when I reflect, as I often do, how many burthens I am obliged to throw upon you. Bear up under them, my dear Beckey, a little longer. I hope never to leave you again so encumbered.”

He wrote at every opportunity, generally several times a week, to his wife, giving as usual, in the minutest detail, and often at great length, directions and advice in reference to household affairs and the management of the farm, so as to leave as little care and weight upon her mind as possible. From these letters, passages relating to the Convention are culled, at dates that will be specified. That body convened November 24th, 1789.

“December 5th. — I fear, with you, my dear, that my absence has injured my farming business. This, I hope, will be the last sacrifice I shall make in this way. If, finally, an excellent Constitution for this State should be formed, of which I have sanguine hopes, I shall not regret my loss of time. For, though I can have but little hand in its formation, yet I shall reflect with pleasure that I was a *contributor*, according to my ability, and that my endeavors were pointed singly to the public good. The debates are a daily source of information and satisfaction. The three foundation principles have been substantially agreed on, — that is, two branches to the legislature, a single Executive, with a qualified negative on the legislative acts, and an independent judiciary. There appears so good a disposition in most of the members of the Convention, I hope we

shall get happily through the formation of the Constitution; but it will take more time than I expected, probably till new-year's-day at least. Have patience, my dear Beckey, this once. God forbid I should ever again leave you so long, and so burthened with business, even for considerations more weighty than those which occasion my present absence."

On the 9th, he repeats the same anxious solicitude and distress of mind at the thought of her being left so long under the heavy charge of his affairs. "With much pain, I now inform you that I am fearful the session of the Convention will continue a good deal longer than I at first expected. We have made a slow progress hitherto."

"January 15th, 1790. — I am yet to lament that I can give you no kind of assurance when the Convention will rise. Perhaps our work is not two-thirds done. All the points which we have yet gone over do not satisfy all the members, and some of them will be resumed and contended for. We shall, most certainly, be sitting until the General Assembly meets again the beginning of February. So that, if Esquire Gore and Mr. Butler come down at that time, they will find me here; and, if the Convention should rise soon after, I can ride one of their horses home."

"February 15th. — The Convention still sitting; and probably will not rise before the close of this week. The Wyoming business being before the Assembly, and Pennsylvania claimants pushing hard to repeal the confirming law, may occasion my staying here the best part of next week; but I hope anxiously to be at home by next Sunday week."

While Colonel Pickering took a deep interest in the proceedings of the Convention, and attended it faithfully and punctually to the last hour of its session, his special care was given to insert in its provisions the duty of securing the blessings of education to the whole people. Chief Justice McKean threw the great weight

of his talents and influence in favor of the object, and the principle was ingrafted into the Constitution. But on all points Colonel Pickering worked with vigilant zeal to establish an efficient and just government in Pennsylvania. He studied every subject thoroughly, and sought light to guide his influence and vote from every quarter. The following letter, of February 7th, 1790, in answer to his request to have the benefit of the judgment of its distinguished writer, is a valuable document, worthy of serious consideration at all times. William Bradford had been for some time Attorney-General, and not long after was a Judge of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and subsequently Attorney-General of the United States.

“TUESDAY NIGHT.

“DEAR SIR,

“Agreeably to your request, I have considered the article in the proposed plan of government, which enables the party accused before a court of oyer and terminer to remove the proceedings into the Supreme Court. I must take the liberty of saying that I do not readily perceive the necessity of this clause. If it is apprehended that the Justices of that Court will be incompetent to the task assigned them, the power of trying capital offences ought not to be given to them. If otherwise, there can be no reason in preventing them from exercising it. It is the opinion of Beccaria, and all enlightened philosophers on this subject, that punishment should follow the crime as quickly as possible; but the clause in question proceeds on a different principle, and its natural operation is to postpone the punishment till the remembrance and detestation of the crime is weakened or lost.

“As the law stands in England at present, a certiorari is never granted by the Court of King’s Bench at the suit of a defendant, in an indictment, without some special cause. This has been the law for ages there. It has been the law of Pennsylvania ever since it had a form of government, and I

find the provision expressly inserted in one of our earliest acts for establishing courts of judicature. This practice has never been complained of in England, and I have not heard of any *real inconvenience* it has produced in this country. The whole clause, therefore, might be safely omitted.

“But if some provision is to be made on this subject, I conceive it ought to be a qualified one. As the clause stands, it is merely a shelter for guilt. The innocent will court a speedy trial; the guilty alone will avoid it. By them the indictments will be removed, of course. They will not dread the expense; and, as the *nisi prius* courts are held in some counties but once in two years, and in the rest annually, there will be an hundred chances of escape, arising from the weakness of the jail, the arts of corruption, the death or the absence of witnesses. And, if nothing more is effected, yet a rogue will at least have the satisfaction of being maintained a year or two in idleness at the expense of the county, who ought during that time to be at hard labor, or perhaps hanged as incorrigible. When a witness is a foreigner (as often happens), a few months’ delay will totally defeat a prosecution.

“The clause, therefore, should be so modified that, while in extraordinary cases it may serve as a shield for innocence, it may not be abused to the obstruction of justice. This, I conceive, may be done by preserving the rule, which now exists, of prohibiting the removal of indictments, without some special cause be shown; but instead of referring the party to the Justices of the Supreme Court alone (who may be at too great a distance), it may be proper to give the Court before whom the cause is depending a discretionary power of allowing or rejecting a *certiorari* issued without a special *allocatur* or the fiat of the prosecutor for the Commonwealth. Might it not, therefore, be advisable to add to the clause the following restriction, viz. : —

“‘But no writ of removal, presented by the party accused, shall be allowed by the Court where the indictment shall be depending, but upon special cause shown, unless the same shall have been specially awarded by the Supreme Court.’

“This will effect no change in the law, except that it will

give the court of oyer and terminer a concurrent discretionary power with the Supreme Court of judging of the reasonable cause upon which a removal ought to take place. I have chosen the words 'special cause,' because these are the words used in our law books, and to which a pretty definite meaning has become affixed. I believe this restriction will be sufficient to prevent *most* of the evils I have mentioned.

"With sentiments of great regard, I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"W. BRADFORD.

"Hon. T. PICKERING, Esq."

While the Constitutional Convention was in session, Colonel Pickering paid a visit to Charles Thomson, the Secretary of the old Congress during the whole period of its existence, from 1774 to the close of 1789. His name stands recorded on the journals and proceedings of that body, which carried the United States gloriously through the Revolutionary war, and made way for the establishment of the nation under the Constitution of the Federal government. Writing to his wife, December 16th, 1789, and mentioning that he had been to Belmont, the seat of his friend Richard Peters, Colonel Pickering says : —

"I had not been at Belmont for six weeks till last Sunday. I lodged there ; and the next day Mr. Peters and I went to see Charles Thomson, who lives six or seven miles above him. He was very glad to see us. We dined there. He has fitted up a small stone house very neatly, and has a fine farm of six hundred acres, on which he intends to live the residue of his days. It is in bad order, owing to its having been many years in the hands of tenants. It will take him the rest of his life to bring it into complete order ; but this, though attended with trouble, will be a constant source of pleasure : for nothing is so agreeable, nothing excites perpetual cheerfulness, like improvements growing up under our own care and management. The plantation belonged to Mrs. Thom-

son's father. She asked about you, and desired me to present you her respects. Mr. Thomson has been in the public service ever since the year 1774, with a handsome salary; yet he seriously declares he has not benefited in point of wealth: on the contrary, he says, his fortune is rather impaired. Yet you know they have no children to support. On the arrangement of the new government, no office was provided for him. He retired from Congress about August last, I think somewhat chagrined. But this will wear off; and, as he and his wife have a competent fortune, they will live more happily than ever in their present retirement; at least, he will be happy. He is a man of sense and learning, and, in the intervals of attention to farming, will indulge his taste for reading. He is now revising his translation of the Bible, which perhaps may one day be published to the world. He will soon enjoy what every man of understanding would deem the best ambition towards the close of life, 'leisure and ease, with dignity.' "

The Convention took a recess, early in April; but Colonel Pickering was still detained at Philadelphia. On the 6th of April he wrote thus to his wife. The "situation" he regrets not to have obtained was that of Surveyor-General of Pennsylvania, which his friends, as has been mentioned, had endeavored to procure for him.

"MY DEAR BECKEY,

"When shall I see you? When shall I, by more assiduous attentions and increased kindness, make you amends for the many burthens my untoward fate has thrown upon you? Six months I have been absent! I am alarmed at the thought; when every thing has contributed to render you the more unhappy. Disappointments in respect to a change of situation in prospect, and all my farming affairs mismanaged, or suffering for want of a very little attention. All these things are constant sources of vexation; and the more, as my finances are in ill condition to encounter any losses. To crown all, the confirming law repealed! I have not been

able on different occasions to refrain from adopting the language, 'All these things are against me.' But we are shortsighted creatures, and know not what a day may bring forth. 'Tis by numerous disappointments we are taught to philosophize; by repeated crosses and troubles, we, if ever, learn the duties and excellencies of Christianity. For myself, I confess, I am not cast down. Every painful sensation I feel arises from my concern for my dear Beckey and her lovely boys. It was my ardent wish to have been in a situation which would afford a prospect of ease and tranquillity for the residue of our days, especially in the decline of life. I hoped, also, to have been able to have placed our sons in eligible situations as they grew up. Whether this wish and this hope will ever be accomplished, time only can unfold. But my expectations, however, are very moderate: it is best they should be; it will soften disappointment.

"You will be surprised not to see me with Mr. Gore and Mr. Butler. *I shall wait for one more disappointment.*"

What is referred to in this last sentence will shortly appear. It is best, in the first place, to despatch, once for all, the matter of the "confirming law," as the reader will naturally desire to know how that long and vexatious business was ended. A letter to Mrs. Pickering, dated April 8th, thus speaks of it: —

"I hope the people will not be disheartened about the repeal of the confirming law. Every disinterested man of sound judgment condemns the repeal, and says it will avail nothing to the Pennsylvania claimants. Many members of the Assembly, who voted for the repeal, have since said openly that they suppose the Connecticut claimants will hold the lands; but, the Pennsylvania claimants having generally desired the repeal, they were willing to gratify them, and thus rid the State of the burthen of the compensation. The people ought not to blame me. I have done every thing in my power to prevent the repeal, and am determined to stand by them to the last. How great and laborious have been

my exertions in this affair, I expect Mr. Gore and Mr. Butler will inform the people. A part of my labor you will see in the enclosed statement of facts and observations, which I laid before the Committee of the House while the matter was under their consideration. No doubt Franklin and Jenkins, and a few others, may triumph. But they have no cause: it is owing to their unwarranted schemes and measures that the commissioners were interrupted in the examination of the claims, which alone gave a handle first to suspend and then to repeal the law. Mr. Lewis (the ablest lawyer in the State) and Mr. Rawle (another lawyer), both members of the General Assembly, have protested against the repeal. Mr. Peters joins them in the opinion that the repeal will avail nothing. The opinions of these three gentlemen will have more weight with men of sense, than the opinions of as many hundreds of such men as those who voted for the repeal. Mr. Morris, Mr. Clymer, and Mr. Fitzsimons, all celebrated characters, are entirely and warmly on our side. Doctor Johnson, of Connecticut (whom the people of Wyoming know), is of the same opinion, — that the confirming laws cannot be made void. My letter to him on the subject, and his answer, I also enclose, as well as a letter from Judge Brearly, who was one of the Commissioners of the Federal Court at Trenton. I enclose also a copy of a second letter from Doctor Johnson. Be careful of all these papers; and if Mr. Bowman lends them to others to be read, desire him to take the necessary caution against their being lost. I wish them to be read by all who are honestly desirous of obtaining information on the subject. Adieu!

T. PICKERING."

Thus ended Colonel Pickering's connection with the Wyoming land controversy. It was so extraordinary in many of its incidents, and involved him in so much responsibility, labor, and experience of personal trial and suffering, that it demanded a place in his biography; and the subject, that his relation to it might be understood, required the extended treatment which is here brought to a close.

The "one more disappointment," for which he waited in Philadelphia, actually took place. The annoyances he met with in public life, and particularly those accompanying applications for office, sometimes almost led him to abjure all further employments outside of the most private sphere. Writing to his wife, he says, "There is nothing I would more earnestly pray for in respect to my sons, than that they might engage in such private pursuits as to preclude even the wish for a public employment." In a letter to his brother, after expressing his regret at the failure of his friends to secure for him the office of Surveyor-General of Pennsylvania, he repeats the sentiment thus, — "If God spares my life till my sons grow up, I shall endeavor to put them to employments by which they may support themselves independently of any public offices; for that alone can give and insure an independence of spirit and that dignity of mind, which, while it renders the individual happy, does honor to human nature."

While his mind was full of such ideas, and he was ready to start for home, and turn his back upon office-holding and office-seeking, on the evening of April 5th, 1790, his friend Andrew Ellicott called upon him at his lodgings, informing him that Mr. Duer had resigned the office of Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Ellicott had just arrived from New York, and he was sure of the fact. He expressed a full conviction that Colonel Pickering had only to make application to obtain the office. Major Hodgdon also strongly urged him to ask for the situation. It was one, too, for which he felt himself fully competent, and its duties would be agreeable to him. The attraction prevailed. He wrote to his wife,

“It is, perhaps, the last time that I shall ever apply for an office.” The next morning’s post carried the following application to the Secretary of the Treasury. The friendship that had long existed between them gave to the communication the ordinary character of a letter, of which the first draught was this:—

“PHILADELPHIA, April 6th, 1790.

“DEAR SIR,

“Last evening a gentleman called on me to inform me of Mr. Duer’s resignation, and to urge me to apply for the vacant office. Having since reflected on a variety of circumstances which would render the office eligible, I have concluded to make known to you my willingness to take it, if you, who know me perfectly well, think I can give you the aid you would wish for, and expect, in an assistant.

“When I went to Wyoming three years ago, vested with the office of Prothonotary and the four other offices usually annexed to it in a new county, I supposed I was fixed for life. But a train of disasters and a ruinous expense have attended my removal; and, in the conclusion, my reward from the legislature, for my services and sufferings in introducing the laws and government of this State into that country, is the repeal of that law by which the disputed lands were confirmed to the Connecticut claimants, and under the faith of which I purchased a farm and erected the necessary buildings; a law, too, which I pledged myself to those people that the legislature would never repeal.

“The education of seven sons is a powerful motive to this application. The repeal of the confirming law will keep the Wyoming settlement in a situation which will probably, for several years, prevent the establishment of a tolerable school.

“I intended to set out for Wyoming to-morrow, but will now wait your answer. If the office should remain vacant, and be conferred on me, it would nevertheless be absolutely necessary for me, before I should go to New York, to visit my family and let my farm.

“Yours, &c.”

“ The letter was sent under cover addressed to Colonel Pickering’s brother-in-law, Paine Wingate, Delegate to the old Congress, as has been stated, from New Hampshire, and one of the first Senators from that State in the new Congress, with a request for him to deliver it, in person, to the Secretary of the Treasury. It was immediately attended to by Mr. Wingate, as appears by this letter from him to Colonel Pickering : —

“ NEW YORK, April 8th, 1790.

“ I have this day received your favor, dated the 6th instant, and have seen Colonel Hamilton and given him your letter. He told me that the hurry of his business would not admit him to write you an answer at present ; but wished that I would inform you from him, that, in casting about in his mind for an assistant, you had not occurred to him, and that he had made a proposal to a gentleman (whom he did not name), who, of course, had the option of the place ; that, however, if that person should decline, which was possible, though he rather thought not probable, he should think very favorably of your proposal ; that he knew your abilities and fitness for the place. He desired that the purport of the above might be communicated to you, and observed that there would not be a propriety in pledging himself more positively. I have no doubt of his sincerity in what he said, and think you would have the offer, if the place had not been disposed of too far to retract, unless the gentleman should decline, which I do not expect, but should be very glad to see. I believe the place might answer the purpose, and be in the way to something better, but I had not thought of it before. I suppose the reason was, that it was not the head of a department, and the emoluments not considerable. I most heartily wish to see you in the government, and think it will be, somehow or other, before long. I am sorry for the perplexities you are meeting with as to those lands in controversy ; but hope that which at present appears unfortunate will be the means of putting you into a situation more useful to the public, more advantageous to yourself, and more agreeable to your friends.”

It turned out that Colonel Pickering's competitor for the office was his friend, correspondent, and intimate associate, Tench Coxe, a man of genius and talent, a great proficient and writer on subjects of political economy, trade, and manufactures. Hamilton knew that he had studied the resources of the country, favored many of his views, and had, no doubt, conferred with him on topics within the sphere of the financial department of the government. It is probable that he had encouraged him to apply for the office ; and the only ground on which he expressed to Mr. Wingate a doubt whether he would accept it was, that Mr. Coxe might, upon hearing that Colonel Pickering was a candidate for it, step aside in his favor.

Understanding that Mr. Coxe was an applicant, Pickering thought that the relations between them demanded the most frank communication, and immediately obtained an interview with him, which is thus described in a letter to Richard Peters, dated, Philadelphia, April 9th, 1790 : —

“ Since I parted with you yesterday, I have seen the gentleman whose name I mentioned to you in connection with an office. He has with great candor recited to me the motives of his application. You will recollect that I told you, our several applications were transmitted by the same post, without any knowledge of each other's intentions ; and that I accounted for his application, from the business of the office being congenial, with the bent of his mind, and his having had a constant intercourse with —, to whom he had made many useful communications relative to his department ; and that, by his talents and professional knowledge, he could render the public very valuable service, and, therefore, that I should be perfectly satisfied in his appointment. He has now told me, that his present profession was never pleasing to him ;

that to relinquish it would have been agreeable; and that, having for two or three years past, *devoted* his time and attention to the great objects of the Union, to the prejudice of his private affairs, a change for a public employment is become really desirable. In a word, the like reasons appear to have induced *his* application, as have sometimes led you and me to converse on public offices, in which, while we should usefully serve our country, we might derive those advantages to ourselves which ought ever to be contemplated by men who have wives and children (affecting names) depending on their labors for an agreeable present support and future establishment in life. Thus much it seemed proper for me to say of the gentleman referred to, whether he should or should not be the successful candidate. Both of us, perhaps, are expecting what may already have been disposed of; but neither of us, I am sure, will sensibly feel the disappointment. He because he has a fortune under his foot; I, because I am above want. Accustomed in early life to occasional labor, I resort to it without reluctance; and, when following the plough, shall feel as grateful and as happy as another who is basking in the sunshine of power.

“With affectionate esteem, I am truly yours,

“T. PICKERING.”

“To R. PETERS, Esq.”

Mr. Coxe, while candidly explaining to Colonel Pickering the reasons that had led him to apply for the office, and acknowledging that the discharge of its duties would be particularly agreeable, openly declared to others that, had he known that Pickering desired it, he certainly should not have applied for the situation, and further said that he sincerely hoped that the Colonel would be appointed; in short, that considering his services, character, and condition, he ought to have it. But, as the sequel will show, Washington had other things in view as to Colonel Pickering, of which, however, at the time, the latter had no intimation, and Mr. Coxe was appointed, according to the original arrangement.

The whole affair was most honorable to all the parties concerned.

Colonel Pickering, having no longer occasion to remain in Philadelphia, returned at last to Wyoming. Although disappointed, he was not cast down. "Following his plough;" placed "above actual want" by his experience and love of labor, by frugal habits, and simple tastes and desires, and rich in purity and integrity of soul, a conscience void of offence, and trust in God, — he was still a grateful and happy man. This interesting passage of his life was concluded by the interchange of the following letters: —

"NEW YORK, May 13th, 1790.

"DEAR SIR,

"The offer of your service, as successor to Mr. Duer, reached me in due time.

"I can, with truth, assure you that you were one of a very small number who held a competition in my judgment, and that, had personal considerations alone influenced me, I could, with difficulty, have preferred another. Reasons of a peculiar nature, however, have determined my choice towards Mr. Tench Coxe, who, to great industry and very good talents, adds an extensive theoretical and practical knowledge of trade.

"Allow me to say that, knowing as I now do, your views to public life, I shall, from conviction of your worth, take pleasure in promoting them; and I hope an opportunity will not be long wanting.

"I remain, with sincere esteem and warm regard, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

"A. HAMILTON.

"TIMOTHY PICKERING, Esq."

"WILKESBARRE, July 20th, 1790.

"DEAR SIR,

"Conveyances to and from this place rarely offer; which, I suppose, prevented my receiving your favor of May 13th until a few days past.

“In appointments to public employments, when I had such to make, I am not conscious that personal considerations ever influenced my choice. The same principle determines me to be satisfied ; and, if you will allow the expression, to approve of your appointment of the successor to Mr. Duer. The very causes of preference mentioned by you, led me to expect *that* preference would be given ; and, under similar circumstances, I hope I possess sufficient independence of mind to have done the same.

“I feel myself greatly obliged by your friendly assurances of promoting my views to public life and your expressions of personal regard for me ; but whether your endeavors to serve me should or should not be successful, and if I for ever remain in obscurity, yet I shall never forget those qualities and talents which, during an acquaintance of twelve years with you, have commanded my affection and respect.

“With the utmost sincerity, I remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“HONORABLE ALEXANDER HAMILTON, Esq.”

CHAPTER XIV.

The First Congress under the Constitution. — Colonel Pickering's Mission to the Seneca Indians. — His Views as to the Education and Civilization of the Indians. — Declines the Office of Superintendent of the Northern Indians. — Declines the Office of Quartermaster of the Western Army. — Mission to the Six Nations. — Appointed Postmaster-General of the United States. — Letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania.

1789-1791.

At the opening of the Federal government, Paine Wingate, it will be remembered, was one of the Senators from New Hampshire. His letters at the time, while continuing the thread of Colonel Pickering's Biography, are interesting and valuable, as from an eye-witness and immediate participator in the first movements of the political machinery under the Constitution of the United States. Some extracts from them are now presented : —

“NEW YORK, March 25th, 1789.

“I am again returned to this place, in a situation which I did not calculate upon last year, when I left it. [After stating that it was five weeks since he passed through Salem, on his way to take his seat in Congress, he continues:] To our no small disappointment and mortification, we have not yet been able to make a quorum of either House [they had been waiting since the 4th of March], but have reason to expect that, this day, there will be a sufficient number of the Representatives, four more only being now necessary. I wish the prospect of the Senate was equally favorable. New York have not chosen their Senators. Several of those chosen are detained by sickness, and others by some unfortunate circumstances, so that our sole dependence for a quorum immediately is on a single gentleman from Delaware. He had not

designed to come on until the 10th of April, but, in consequence of letters informing him of our situation, it is hoped that he will be here this week.

“As we have not made a Congress, the votes for President and Vice-President cannot be opened. However, it is well known that General Washington is unanimously chosen President, and Mr. Adams has thirty-three votes for Vice-President, which is a clear plurality, though not a majority. The others voted for are very scattering, and the number of votes for any is very inconsiderable. How the President and Vice-President elect are to be notified is not yet determined. Many are applying for the honor of being the messengers. Considerable time must be taken up by those gentlemen in coming on, and no great business can well be completed until their arrival. Those delays are viewed by many as unfavorable to the introduction of the new government, and, at least for a while, will impede the revenue laws, which the United States are in distress for. But patience must have its perfect work. I cannot but hope and believe that our public affairs will bear a better aspect soon. The members which I have known yet appear to me to be worthy and good characters. I think the members of both Houses will, almost unanimously, be firm friends to the government. Those who have heretofore had their objections will be so few that they will probably not think it expedient to raise difficulties. I am told that your old friend, Mr. Gerry, speaks very moderately upon the subject. Nobody thinks that a General Convention will be called. Possibly, in a convenient time, Congress may take up the consideration of amendments or alterations, and recommend some that may quiet the fears and jealousies of the well-designing, and not affect the essentials of the present system. I am rather inclined to suppose that this cannot be attended to immediately, but must be postponed for some more important matters. I have some fears that a dispute may arise as to the place where Congress shall sit; but hope that an expedient plan will soon be adopted for fixing a permanent seat for Congress without affecting our revenue, and that this will preclude a disagreeable dispute on that head. New York have exerted themselves mightily, and, in my opinion, *exces-*

sively, in fitting up the Federal hall. It is said they have expended fifty thousand dollars on the building. But there are some things which will make a continuance here long disagreeable; among others, the unreasonable expense of living is not inconsiderable. It is said by some to be one-third dearer than at Philadelphia. I believe it will be the disposition of the members in general to reduce their own pay, as well as that of the civil list, and the expense of living ought to be correspondent. This reduction the finances of the United States seem to require. How this will suit the swarms of office-hunters, I don't know; but it may at least rid us of some disagreeable importunities, and better reconcile the disappointed to their fate.

“And while I am speaking of appointments I cannot forbear expressing my earnest wish that you might be placed in one, where the public would have a renewed experience of your integrity, ability, industry, and economy. Whether any consideration would induce you to quit your present domestic and State employments, and whether it would be conducive to your interest or your happiness, I cannot tell; but I am sure it will be agreeable to many of your friends, and I think for the honor and interest of your country. I pretend not to know what the sentiments of the President will be towards you, who is well acquainted with you, nor what the dispositions of the Senators of Pennsylvania, who, I conclude, know you. Nor do I pretend to have any considerable share of influence in the Councils further than a single vote; but I am satisfied that your reputation is sufficiently established where partial considerations are out of view, which I hope will evidently be the case in matters of appointment. I will say no more on this head, only that I wish to have your sentiments on what I have now suggested as soon as you have an opportunity. I desire that you would give me your mind without reserve whether any thing, or what, would be agreeable to you. How long my continuance here will be is uncertain. The present session probably cannot be a short one, and the time for which I am elected will soon be decided by a lot.”

When a public employment for which he felt himself competent was in view, and his circumstances at the time made it desirable and important for him to obtain it, Colonel Pickering applied for it directly to the appointing power. It was very disagreeable to him to seek office in any way ; but it was particularly repugnant to his feelings to solicit others to use any influence in his behalf. It is evident from the preceding letter that Mr. Wingate, his brother-in-law, who had become well known by his service in the old, and was now a Senator in the new, Congress, had not been approached by him on such subjects ; and when he so urgently besought Colonel Pickering to allow him to serve him in that way, was quite aggrieved that he still shunned a free communication of his wishes. "The close of your letter," says Wingate, writing to him, April 29th, "was more delicate than was necessary, considering our relations as brothers."

Mr. Wingate informs him of what is going on, and of the speculations in which people indulged about appointments, the organization of the departments, and the policy of the administration generally. It seems there was the same importunate pressure for office then as ever since. Writing July 11th, he says, "I know that many of your friends wish that the public might again have your services in some department of government. I am sensible that there are crowds of seekers who want to quarter themselves on the country, and very likely in many instances will obtain, to the exclusion of others more deserving. I hope that this will not be universally the case." "There has been a mighty struggle, and not a little heat, in the House of Representatives, re-

specting the permanent residence of Congress. They have, by a bare majority, ordered a bill to be brought in for fixing it on the Susquehanna, and to appropriate one hundred thousand dollars to provide the accommodations. After all, I think it doubtful whether it will pass that House, and it is more doubtful in the Senate. I begin to be of opinion that it will not be expedient to attempt a Federal town until the States are more united upon that subject as well as upon some others. We seem disposed to contrive other ways enough for the public money without applying any of it to that, or to paying the national debt."

After mentioning the appointment of "Colonel Hamilton as Secretary to the Treasury, at \$3,500 per annum; General Knox, Secretary at War, at \$3,000," and some others, he says: "It was the ardent wish of many that you should have been in some of those important departments."

In a letter dated August 2d, 1790, Mr. Wingate says: —

"We have at last finished (I trust) two tedious subjects: those of residence and of the funding system; whether well done or not, time must determine. There may perhaps yet be an attempt to keep Congress here two years longer, but I think with very little prospect of obtaining it. I expect, if nothing extraordinary should prevent, to be at Philadelphia next December, and should be very happy to have the opportunity of seeing you there, more especially if you had some agreeable appointment in the government and was removed there. It is said that Mr. Osgood will resign his place when Congress shall remove. If his place would be agreeable to you, it is my wish you might obtain it. As the Post-office bill is only continued until the next session of Congress, I suppose no new Postmaster-General will be now appointed;

but if he should resign (which I hardly think likely) before the next meeting of Congress, the President would appoint one to succeed. I should think the business might not be disagreeable. I think you will probably see the President at Philadelphia, and may it not be worth while for you to let him know your sentiments respecting the appointment? I know that it is not your disposition to court favors, or to urge any thing from interested views; but you will judge what is proper, and act accordingly. It would be a gratification to many of your friends to see you in office."

Upon receiving this letter, and reflecting on its contents, he made up his mind that the place suggested would be suitable and agreeable, and one in which he felt confident he could render useful service to the country. Friends whom he consulted were of the same opinion. He accordingly wrote the following letter to the President:—

"PHILADELPHIA, September 3d, 1790.

"SIR,

"Generally speaking, no task could be imposed on me so ungrateful as that of applying for a public office. In the present instance, however, I feel little reluctance in doing it, because I know the application will be duly noticed, and the ultimate decision, whether for or against me, be governed by a just regard to the interests of the United States.

"By some of my friends I am informed that Mr. Osgood is determined to resign the office of Postmaster-General, to which they wish me to succeed. They represent it as an office to which I am competent, and I should, myself, conceive it not difficult to execute. Its emoluments, I find, are not very tempting, yet, with economy, may support my family.

"In all events the office would now be desirable. For my appointments in Luzerne County are of inconsiderable value, and my present situation there is in all respects precarious. If the people of this State should elect for their Governor a man who would do real honor to that important station, I should entertain no doubt of a reappointment. But, at pres-

ent, there appears too much ground to fear they will make a very different choice. But, besides that, my offices are of much less value than I was led to believe, and may be of short duration.

“The tenure of my lands there is now rendered uncertain. The General Assembly, at their sessions last spring, with that mischievous instability which characterizes a single legislature, repealed the law, passed three years before, for confirming the titles of the Connecticut settlers at Wyoming. That confirming law was the foundation of peace, and the sole ground of my removal to that country. The repeal has again set the titles afloat; and, in consequence, the Pennsylvania claimants are now about bringing numerous actions of ejectment against us. Should the decisions of the Courts be in their favor, I shall of course lose my lands, on which I very much depended for the maintenance of my family. These evils, which are likely to continue for years, are attended with another, which affects me very sensibly. They prevent the establishment of a school, where my sons (I have seven) may be tolerably educated; and I have not the means of sending them from home.

“These considerations, I hope, Sir, will sufficiently apologize to you for the trouble of this application.

“I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

‘TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“TO GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States.”

The Convention for framing a new Constitution for the State of Pennsylvania finished its business on Thursday, September 2d, 1790, and adjourned, with an understanding that the members would come together, as a body, the next day to meet President Washington. The above letter was written on the morning of Friday, but not sent until a few days afterwards, with this postscript: “Sir, — The enclosed letter was written last Friday, before you spoke to me on the Indian business. The proofs of your confidence in me since, more than

once expressed, furnish an additional motive for presenting it."

A letter to Mrs. Pickering, dated September 6th, gives the following particulars: —

"It seems that I am never to return to you in the time I propose when I leave home. It did not appear expedient to quit the Convention until the business was completed, which was not till last Thursday. My stay I consider as very fortunate; for the next day General Washington (who dined with the Convention) requested me to go on a mission to the Indians, to appease their resentment for the murder of two of their tribe, on the west branch of the Susquehanna. I readily undertook the business, and have written yesterday, by an express, to the Indian chiefs, that I will meet them at Tioga on the 25th of next month. The allowance for my service in this matter will be liberal. The General expressed himself in the most friendly and confidential manner to me; and I was thence the more encouraged to present a letter to him, requesting an appointment to a certain permanent office, when it becomes vacant, which it will be in about three months. I had written the letter the very morning of the day on which he spoke to me about the Indian business, but I did not send it to him until last evening. It is a subject for his consideration only, and I do not expect an answer at this time.

"P. S. I have bought books, penknives, and fish-hooks for the boys. I hope they will deserve them.--T. P."

The following letters were written the day after the Indian mission was proposed and accepted: —

"COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"You are hereby authorized and required forthwith to proceed to the Painted Post, — or to such other place or places as may seem proper, there to meet, in behalf of the United States, the sachems, chiefs, and warriors of the Seneca Nation of Indians, or any person or persons deputed by them: to assure them that the murders committed at Pine Creek on some of their tribe are causes of great displeasure to the

United States; to explain to them what measures have been taken, and are still proposed to be taken, to apprehend and bring the offenders to justice; to communicate to them in a plain and fair manner the late act of Congress respecting the trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes; to declare to them the friendly disposition of the Federal government towards them, and its readiness to extend protection and support to them on all needful occasions; and in general to do such matters and things as may be necessary for the more complete execution of the foregoing powers.

“Given under my hand and seal, this 4th day of September, 1790.

“G. WASHINGTON.”

“PHILADELPHIA, September 4th, 1790.

“SIR,

“In the public letter which accompanies this, you will receive such instructions for your conduct in your mission to the Seneca tribe of Indians as may, without impropriety, be communicated to them. Some others shall here be added, more peculiarly proper for your own ear. It is particularly desirable that they be made to understand that all business between them and any part of the United States is hereafter to be transacted by the general government, and that the person who will attend you on the part of the executive of the State of Pennsylvania be induced to corroborate this explicitly, by his declarations to them.

“The Indians have demanded that the property of the deceased Indians, taken by the murderers, be restored. I am informed that this has been secured by the executive of Pennsylvania, to whom, therefore, you will apply for the same, and take proper measures for restoring it. They have further demanded that the property of the murderers be given up to them. I am informed that they had no property but lands. You will explain this to them, and, of course, that there is nothing to render under this demand. The Executive of Pennsylvania had proposed to purchase goods suitable to the Indians, to the amount of 266 $\frac{2}{3}$ dollars, to be given to the friends of the deceased, as a satisfaction for the wrong done them. You will take, on behalf of the United States, so

much of this purchase as has been made, for which they shall be repaid, and you will complete the same to the amount before mentioned, if it be not completed; and you will take measures for having the goods conveyed to the place of meeting, where you will cause them to be so distributed among the friends of the deceased as shall be most likely to give complete satisfaction. It is desirable that they be induced to content themselves with this peace-offering; but should they consider it as absolutely inadequate, you will, in your discretion, give them such assurances of further gifts as the necessity of the case shall require. So, also, should any presents to the chiefs of the nation appear to you necessary, you will do therein what, in your discretion, you shall perceive to be indispensable. You are to receive for your time and trouble eight dollars a day, from the date hereof until your return, in addition to your reasonable expenses, as well personal as for the general objects of your mission. It is expected that you will be at the place of meeting by the — instant, and have there at the same time, if possible, the presents provided; or otherwise, that you take measures for their being conveyed thither by as early a day as possible.

“In all your proceedings you are desired to adhere to as strict economy as the objects of your mission will reasonably admit.

“I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

“G. WASHINGTON.

“COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

On receiving these communications, Colonel Pickering the same day despatched the following by a trusty messenger: —

“Brothers, Sachems, Chiefs, and Warriors of the SENECA NATION.

“I address you in the name and by the authority of the United States of America, in pursuance of the orders of their President and Great Chief General Washington.

“Brothers, the killing of two of your nation at Pine Creek has kindled the resentment not only of Pennsylvania but of the United States; and diligent endeavors are used for taking

the murderers, that they may suffer the punishment due for their crime. Our Great Chief abhors such wicked men; and is determined that no injury done to our brothers of the Indian nations at peace with the United States, shall go unpunished, if the offenders can be found. Brothers, our Great Chief, General Washington, is renowned through the world for his justice and goodness; and you and all the Indian nations may perfectly rely upon his virtues. But though his arm is strong and extends over all the thirteen States, yet wicked men may sometimes escape. For we are a great people numerous as the stars which in a clear night brighten the heavens. Among such multitudes a few bad men may pass unknown; or they may hide themselves in the forests, or going to the sea-coast, get into the big vessels, and sail over the great water to other countries. If, therefore, for any injuries done to you, brothers, or to any others of the Indian nations, the bad men who commit them should not be brought to punishment, rest assured it will be because they hide themselves where they cannot be found, or flee from their country.

“Brothers, as all business between you and the citizens of these States is in future to be conducted by the authority of the United States, through their President, I now inform you that I am appointed by him to wash off the blood of our murdered brothers, and wipe away the tears from the eyes of their friends. For these purposes I will meet the relations of the deceased at Tioga on Monday the 25th day of October next. And, brothers, the President, our Great Chief, desires that the chiefs of the Turtle tribe and other great men of your nation will on that day come to Tioga with the relations of the deceased, to be witnesses to the above transaction, to receive the assurances of his good-will towards you and of the friendship of the United States. Then too the chain of friendship between us shall be brightened; and may the Great Spirit lead your nation and the United States to keep it always bright while the sun shines.

“Dated at Philadelphia the 4th day of September, 1790.

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

Colonel Pickering started on his mission, accompanied by his friend, Mr. Bowman, and carrying with them

such articles as were necessary for distribution in a treaty with Indians, on the 17th of October, 1790. Writing to his wife from Tioga, October 28th, he says, "I suspect I shall be detained here much longer than I expected when I left home. Not an Indian has yet appeared." Again, from Tioga Point, November 2d, "I am just informed of some gentlemen going down the river. I seize the occasion to tell you that five runners arrived last Friday evening, and the next morning delivered a speech, informing me that the Seneca Indians from Buffalo Creek would be here by about next Saturday, the 6th instant, to the number of five hundred, and two or three hundred more from Genessee. In all probability, they may stay a week." Again, from the same place, November 9th, "This morning Mr. Ellicott has arrived, and intends to proceed immediately after breakfast. I take my pen just to inform you that my back is nearly recovered from the injury received in lifting a canoe. Mr. Ellicott will tell you all the news respecting the Indians. I expect them here next Thursday, which will be the 11th." Writing to Mr. Hodgdon on the 11th, he says : —

"I have been waiting here about a fortnight for the coming of the Indians ; but they are not yet arrived, though they undoubtedly will be here next Saturday. Some *white* villains among them, who wish to make themselves important and necessary on all such occasions, have greatly contributed to this delay. Though, as soon as I arrived here, Colonel Spaulding (who is well acquainted with the Indians) told me I must not look for them in less than a fortnight ; 'tis their usual practice to be extremely dilatory. Mr. Ellicott arrived here last Tuesday. The Indians, he says, retarded his business ; and the British, from Niagara, endeavored to prevent their attending this treaty. I have certain information of two hundred and thirty-four advancing, and stragglers may make up

three hundred. It is probable, from their deliberate manner of doing business, that I shall not get clear of them till the last of next week. I shall stay at Wyoming till our County Court is over, the first week in December, and, in a few days after, proceed to Philadelphia."

He wrote to his wife from Tioga Point, Monday, November 15th: —

"The Seneca Indians arrived yesterday afternoon. The chiefs say they expect some chiefs of the other nations, particularly the Cayugas, and desire to wait two days for their arrival. If they do not come by that time, they say they will begin business without them. On Wednesday, therefore, I expect a speech from them in council; and, if we finish by Saturday night, they will make more despatch than usual. In short, if I get home by the close of next week, it will be as much as I expect, though I shall hurry them as much as possible. They are of all ages, — some very old, and some infants at the breast. This is their usual manner of attending treaties, and is one cause of their tedious delays. I find a person to know how to manage them must serve at least a short apprenticeship in learning their manners and customs. Were I to conduct another treaty, I should prepare for it, better to the satisfaction of the Indians, and much more to my own. But I shall give them a plain hint that it will be expedient for them, in time to come, to treat by a deputation of their chiefs, and not by assembling their whole nation.

"Last evening, agreeably to my invitation, the chiefs came to smoke a pipe with me, drink grog, and eat our bread and butter and cheese. This morning, they have sent a message to inform me that their *ladies* will make me a visit. I did not invite them, but I must receive them in the same manner I did the chiefs. They have among them some very pretty boys. Fortunately, the young people generally stayed at home, it being the season for hunting. The chiefs made apologies that so few attended the treaty, and said the warriors generally declined coming, because, if they came, they should lose the best season for hunting. I told them no apology was necessary, and that I thought they judged very prudently in determining to

pursue their hunting, which was so important to them for getting provisions and skins. But for this circumstance, I should probably have been troubled with six or seven hundred. I shall have many curious facts to relate, but must reserve them till my return."

Many interesting documents connected with this treaty are preserved, from which the following account may be drawn, illustrating the usages on such occasions. Colonel Pickering states that the Conference was designed to be with the Indians of the Seneca Nation "relative to the murder of their brothers at Pine Creek, in Pennsylvania, the circumstances of which he describes as having been "barbarous;" but Indians of the other nations came with the Senecas, considering the injury as done to them all. Runners had been sent by some leading sachems through the Six Nations, urging them to attend the conference; the message concluding in these words: "This is from your brothers, sachems, chiefs, and warriors, walking to the Big Fire at Tioga Point."

On the afternoon of November 14th, some twenty or thirty chiefs, on his invitation, but in an informal meeting, had smoked a pipe with Colonel Pickering at his quarters. The first regular conference took place the next day, of which the following minutes are in his handwriting: —

"'Brothers, Sachems, Chiefs, and Warriors of the SIX NATIONS,

"'I bid you a hearty welcome to this council fire, and thank the Great Spirit who has brought us together in safety, though I sincerely lament the cause of our meeting,—I mean the murder of our two brothers of your nation at Pine Creek.

"'Brothers; I have already informed you by letter that I was appointed by our Great Chief, General Washington, to

meet you on this occasion. You must well know that he is the President or Great Chief of the United States. What I shall say to you will be in his name, by the authority of the United States, pursuant to the powers vested in me by this Commission under his hand and seal.'

"The President's commission to me was then read and interpreted.

"'Brothers: I desire you to look on my commission, and observe the seal of our Great Chief, and his name, written with his own hand.'

"My commission was then handed round among the chiefs.

"'Brothers: As this is the first time that I have held a treaty with you, it cannot be expected that I am well acquainted with your customs. I therefore desire you to excuse any defect in point of form. But what I speak to you shall be the truth; which I am sure you will think more important than a strict observance of ceremonious forms.

"'Brothers: You now see my commission, which has been read and interpreted, that, according to my letter to you, I was appointed to wash off the blood of our murdered brothers, and wipe away the tears from the eyes of their friends; and that this occasion was to be improved to brighten the chain of friendship between you and the United States.

"'Brothers: You said the hatchet was yet sticking in your head. I now pull it out. I have now met you to wash off the blood of the slain, and wipe away the tears from the eyes of their friends. And, as a token of friendship and peace, and of the perfect security with which we may confer together, I now present to you these strings.'

"I then delivered to the principal chief, usually called 'The Farmer's Brother,' strings of wampum. After some consultation with the chiefs near him, he rose and addressed me to the following effect:—

"'Brother: We thank the Great Spirit who has appointed this day, in which we sit side by side, and look with earnestness on each other. We know you have been long waiting for us, and suppose you have often stretched up your neck,

to see if we were coming. Brother: We sent your letter to the Grand River by the Fish Carrier, and we have been waiting for its return; but it has not yet come to hand; and therefore we cannot yet properly enter upon business. We must wait two days for the arrival of the Fish Carrier, or to hear from him. But, in the mean time, as the letter is not come back, we desire you to accept this belt as a pledge.'

"He then delivered the belt.

"After a pause, the chief, called Red Jacket, rose, and spoke to this effect:—

"'Brother: We are happy to see you here, for which we thank the Great Spirit.

"'Brother: You say you are not acquainted with our customs. Brother: we are young, but we will describe the ancient practices of our fathers. The roads we now travel were cleared by them. When they used to meet our brothers of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, our brothers not only pulled the hatchet out of their heads, but buried it. You say you have now pulled the hatchet out of our heads; but you have only cast it behind you; and you may take it up again. Brother: While the hatchet lies unburied, we cannot sit easy on our seats.

"'Brother: From the time we made peace with the United States, we have experienced troubles, even more than before. The United States have also had their troubles. Brother: we now hear General Washington, the Great Chief of the United States, speaking to us by you; and hope our troubles will now have an end. But our eyes are not yet washed, that we may see, nor our throats cleared, that we may speak.'

"As soon as Red Jacket sat down, I rose, and spoke to the following effect:—

"'Brothers: You say that I have only pulled the hatchet out of your heads, and have not buried it; and that, while it remains unburied, you cannot sit easy on your seats.

"'Brothers: In declaring that I pulled the hatchet out of your heads, I meant to comply with your own demand, in your letter to the President and Council of Pennsylvania; which was, that he should come and pull the hatchet out of your heads. However, to give you entire satisfaction in this

point, as the hatchet is already pulled out of your heads, I now bury it, and pray God that it may remain buried; that its edge may never more be seen. Brothers: The United States have no wish but to live with you as brothers in perpetual peace.

“‘I now wash off the blood of your murdered brothers, and the tears from the eyes of their friends.’

“I then drank to their healths.

“After they had been served round with a glass of rum, the Farmer’s Brother rose, and spoke to this effect:—

“‘Brother: You have now taken us by the hand, and washed our eyes. Our women expect you will show them equal attention. They are here waiting your invitation, to receive the same tokens of your friendship, which, the last evening, you gave to us. Perhaps, in taking them by the hand, you may see one who may please you.’ (A general laugh at the speaker’s humor.)

“I rose, and addressed the women:—

“‘Sisters: I am very glad to meet you here. I have seen agreeable women of various complexions, and doubt not such are to be found among you. I invite you to my quarters, where we may eat and drink together in friendship. I now take you by the hand as my sisters.’

“I then went round and shook hands with every woman present.”

While the specific object of Colonel Pickering’s mission was to assuage the resentment to which the Six Nations had been wrought by the murder of two of the Seneca Tribe by white men, it was a matter of the highest, perhaps vital, importance to prevent their joining, from that or any other cause, the Western Indians, then at war with the United States. Colonel John Butler, the Commandant at Fort Niagara, and other British officials on the Canadian frontier, were using all possible means to instigate the Six Nations to hostility. Joseph Brant was giving his great influence in the same di-

rection. There was reason to believe that Cornplanter, the most prominent Seneca chief, had received impressions to the like effect. Red Jacket, who was the principal speaker in the conferences at Tioga Point, had strong prejudices against the United States, which were manifested in his speech on the first day. The difficulties encountered by Colonel Pickering in bringing the Indians to a friendly feeling, were, from these causes, very great. Red Jacket was the great aboriginal orator. His particular title among the tribes, "Soc, que, ya, waun, tau," "Sleeper, wake up," was probably given as expressive of his rousing and magnetizing eloquence. His feelings, however, seem to have become mollified early in the course of the conferences. Colonel Pickering bears this testimony as to his character and deportment on the occasion: "He acted a conspicuous part at the conference, displaying a good understanding, a ready apprehension, and great strength of memory. He was attentive to business at the council fire, and when consulted in private on matters relating to their peculiar customs, he appeared to be well acquainted with them, and always gave me the necessary information very intelligently, with perfect candor, and in a most obliging manner."

Many of the chiefs of the Seneca and other nations showed a good disposition throughout, particularly Farmer's Brother, Good Peter, Captain Hendrick Aupaut, Fish Carrier, and Big Tree. All that was said was in the proper language of the respective speakers, and was passed from one side to the other by "Ear," the name always given to the interpreter.

The final scenes of the negotiation are thus described by Colonel Pickering:—

“Upon conversing with some of the principal chiefs, I found that the delivery of a mourning belt to the head of each family to which the two murdered Indians belonged was an indispensable requisite to appease their minds; that this was an invariable custom among themselves; and that, without a compliance with it, the injuries could not be forgiven. As I had none, the chiefs undertook to inquire among their people for suitable belts, and, if obtained, I engaged to purchase them. I also found that, when I should deliver the belts, they expected me to make a particular address to the relations of the deceased. The belts were procured; and, on the 22d of November, before the council fire was covered, I addressed the whole body of Indians, and the relations of the deceased in particular, in the following speech:—

“‘Brothers: The business for which this council fire was kindled is now finished. The hatchet has been buried, and the chain of friendship is made bright. But, before the fire is put out, I must address a few words to the relations of our two deceased brothers.

“‘My friends: You are now assembled to receive the last public testimony of respect to the memories of our two brothers, whose untimely deaths we have once already joined in lamenting.

“‘Mothers: You have lost two worthy sons, from whom you expected support and comfort in your old age. You appear bowed down with sorrow, as with years. Your affliction must be very great. I also am a parent,—the parent of many sons, the loss of any one of whom would fill me with distress; I therefore can feel for yours.

“‘Brothers and sisters: You have lost two valuable relations, whose assistance was useful, and whose company was pleasing to you, and with whom you expected to pass yet many happy years. With you, also, I can join in mourning your misfortune.

“‘Mothers, Brothers, and Sisters: Let me endeavor to assuage your grief. You enjoy the satisfaction of remembering the good qualities of your deceased sons and brothers, of reflecting that they were worthy men; and of hearing their

names mentioned with honor. Let these considerations afford you some comfort. Death, you know, is the common lot of all mankind; and none can escape its stroke. Some, indeed, live many years; till, like well-ripened corn, they wither and bend down their heads. But multitudes fall in infancy and childhood, like the tender shooting corn, nipped by untimely frosts. Others, again, grown up to manhood, are then cut off, while full of sap and flourishing in all the vigor of life. The latter, it seems, was the state of our two deceased brothers. But, my friends, they are gone, and we cannot bring them back. When the Great Spirit shall so order it, *we* must follow them; but *they* cannot return to us. This is the unalterable course of things, and it is our duty patiently to bear our misfortunes.

“‘Mothers: To manifest the sorrow of the United States for the loss of your sons, and that you and your families may always have with you the usual tokens of remembrance, I now present to you these belts.

“‘Brothers: The stake has been stuck into the ground, and it has been pulled out in presence of you all. We have put into the hole all our troubles, and again stuck in the stake, that they may never rise again.’”

At the request of the Indians, a certified copy of this speech, in his own handwriting, was left with them by Colonel Pickering.

On the following day, November 23d, he delivered to the Indians the present of goods from the government of the United States, prefacing the act with the following speech: —

“‘Brothers: I have told you that I was directed by our Great Chief, the President of the United States, to present to you a quantity of goods, as an atonement for the blood of your brothers, that was spilt at Pine Creek.

“‘Brothers: I now offer you those goods in the name of our Great Chief, and by the authority of the United States. Accept of them, brothers, as a further proof of the friendly

disposition of the United States towards you, and of their readiness to make you reasonable satisfaction for every injury done to you by any of their citizens.

“ ‘Brothers: I shall now deliver a few presents to the nearest friends of the deceased. The residue of the goods you will distribute in such a manner as you know will be most agreeable to the relations, and most satisfactory to your nation.’ ”

When these ceremonies had been terminated, renewals of friendship secured, a treaty concluded, and satisfaction given and taken on both sides, the council fires were covered up. The Indians returned to their homes, and Colonel Pickering repaired to Philadelphia, and made report of his doings.

“The Secretary of War, to whom the President of the United States was pleased to refer the papers containing the proceedings of Colonel Timothy Pickering with the Seneca Indians at Tioga Point in November, 1790.

“Respectfully reports,

“That he has attentively examined the said papers, transmitted by Colonel Pickering, the fourth and twenty-third of the present month of December, and containing an account of his proceedings with the Seneca Indians, pursuant to his instructions and commission from the President of the United States.

“That he is of opinion that the said proceedings of Colonel Timothy Pickering were conducted with abilities and judgment, and consistently with the Constitution and laws of the United States; and also with the candor and humanity which ought to characterize all the treaties of the general government with the unenlightened natives of the country.

“All which is humbly submitted,

“H. KNOX, *Secretary of War*.

“WAR DEPARTMENT, 27th December, 1790.”

"UNITED STATES, December 31st, 1790.

"SIR,

"I have the pleasure to enclose for you the report of the Secretary of War, upon the papers which were referred to him, relative to your transactions with the Seneca Indians in November last.

"To this satisfactory report I am happy to add my entire approbation of your conduct in this business.

"And am with very great esteem and regard, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"G. WASHINGTON.

"COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING."

Colonel Pickering replied as follows : —

"PHILADELPHIA, December 31st, 1790, evening.

"SIR,

"I have this moment received and read your very obliging letter of this date, expressing your entire approbation of my conduct in the conference which, by your orders, I have lately held with the Seneca Indians. This explicit and pointed approbation of my proceedings is the more grateful, because they were my first essay. For, till then, I was an utter stranger to the manners of Indians, and to the proper mode of treating with them. But, Sir, I have found that they are not difficult to please. A man must be destitute of humanity, of honesty, or of common sense, who should send them away disgusted. He must want sensibility, if he did not sympathize with them, on their recital of the injuries they have experienced from white men. Impressed, therefore, with such sentiments, the honorable manner in which you have manifested your approbation of my conduct in this business is more than I expected; though, next to the approbation of my own mind, nothing could have given me more satisfaction.

"With sincere respect, I am, Sir, your obliged and most obedient servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,"

The President, in the letter of particular instructions, presented on a previous page, fixed the compensation of Colonel Pickering for this service at "eight dollars a

day" from September 4th until his "return," in addition to that for "reasonable expenses, as well personal as for the general objects of" the "mission." The whole period during which he had been engaged, if not in actual labor, in his thoughts and cares, in the service, to the day when his report was concluded and presented, on the 24th of December, embraced one hundred and eleven days. At eight dollars a day, his compensation would have amounted, for the *per diem* alone, to eight hundred and eighty-eight dollars. But he charged only for the days which had been wholly and exclusively occupied in the service, as appears by his account, as follows :—

THE UNITED STATES.	TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, Dr.
For my time and trouble in Philadelphia two days, in various matters preparatory to the intended conference, at eight dollars a day . . .	\$16.00
For my time and trouble in procuring provisions for the Indians, and holding a conference with them from October 17th (when I set off from my house in Wilkesbarre for Tioga) until November 29th, at night (when I reached home), both days included, at eight dollars a day	352.00
For my travelling expenses from Wilkesbarre to Tioga and back . . .	3.37
For my time, trouble, and expenses, after my return, in transcribing the rough minutes of the proceedings, to report to the President; in making a journey from Wilkesbarre to Philadelphia for that purpose, and to get the account of expenses settled; and in completing the payments yet to be made to sundry persons in Luzerne county and York State, equal to twelve days, at eight dollars . . .	96.00
	\$467.37"

" PHILADELPHIA, January 8th, 1791.

" SIR,

" Having been accidentally detained here longer than I expected, and a little leisure now presenting, I have thought it would not be misapplied in suggesting the means of introducing the art of husbandry and civilization among our Indian neighbors.

" In the treaty with the Creek Indians, I observe provision is made for furnishing them with domestic animals and in-

struments of husbandry, with a view to change those people from hunters to husbandmen. If it is the wish of the United States (and the clause just mentioned in the treaty with the Creeks warrants the supposition) thus to instruct the Indians in the most important of all arts, the art of husbandry, and to reclaim them from a savage to a civil state, I am disposed to believe that the wish is founded on practicable ideas. But no means hitherto used appear to me to have been properly calculated to produce that effect. It is certain they have not succeeded. And hence many, perhaps most people, think the idea of civilizing the Indians perfectly Utopian. They instance the numerous attempts with a few of the most promising Indian youths, who, after several years' instruction at our schools and colleges, returning to their own country, again become mere savages. But this conclusion is not fairly drawn. We take a few young Indians, and educate them in the style of the children of men of fortune. We spare no pains or expense to give them what is called *learning*, but never teach them a single art by which they may get a subsistence. When grown up to manhood, we send them back to their tribe. But what shall they do? They must eat, and their bodies must be covered. How shall they obtain food and clothing? Their parents and friends have scarcely enough to supply their own necessities. There are no literary professions among them, and their nation has no lucrative offices to bestow. The youths must then provide for themselves. How shall they do it? With all their learning, they acquired no mechanic art; and though surrounded by farmers, they were not taught the art of husbandry. What, then, is their resource? From absolute necessity, they become hunters; for hunting furnishes both food and clothing. But, being hunters, they soon become savages; and all their civil learning is lost upon them. This, I knew, was the general result of educating Indians; but a remedy did not occur till I became personally acquainted with them in the late conference at Tioga. Indeed, till then, I had never had the subject in contemplation. The remedy seemed obvious. Prevent the necessity of their becoming hunters, and they may be gradually civilized. Instead of

educating them like the sons of men of independent fortunes, teach them only reading, writing, and arithmetic ; and, while they are acquiring these arts, let them *practically* learn the art of husbandry. In a word, bring them up precisely in the manner in which our substantial farmers educate their own sons, till they reach the age of twenty-one. When thus instructed, — when thus *habituated* to the most useful labor, — place them in the condition of those farmers' sons. Give to each a cow, a yoke of oxen, a plough, a cart, and the other proper instruments of husbandry. Give them the other necessary domestic animals. They will need no other gifts ; they have land in abundance, inviting the hand of cultivation. To introduce this degree of civilization, the method promising the best success appears to me to be this : Appoint some benevolent man, whose prudence equals his benevolence, to treat on the subject with that tribe of Indians which shall appear best disposed towards the measure. Let it be offered as an experiment, for the benefit of volunteers, with an assurance that 'tis meant for their good ; and that it shall be dropped, if, after a fair experiment, it should not be found useful and agreeable to them. The proposition would be : To open in one of their towns a school of plain learning and husbandry. The director, or superintendent, should have a discreet school-master to teach reading, writing and arithmetic, and two or three young men who are complete farmers, to teach the art of husbandry to such Indian boys and youths as should be found willing to learn, and whose parents should approve of the plan. If the Indians should ever learn and practise the arts of civil life (and I cannot admit the idea that their minds are cast in a mould so different from that of the rest of their species as to be incapable of cultivation), I am inclined to think a beginning must be made nearly in the manner here suggested. The annual expense, for the first two or three years, need not exceed two thousand dollars. The expense afterwards would be proportioned to the number of cattle, &c., which should be furnished. The continuance of expense might be limited to a moderate term of years. Perhaps nearly the whole charge might eventually be defrayed by the Indians, by

voluntary grants of land, in such manner as the President of the United States should approve.

“The experiment being once made, and found successful, might be repeated among all the Indian tribes; and as soon as husbandry shall, with general approbation, be established in a nation, they will find their extensive hunting grounds unnecessary; and will then readily listen to a proposition to sell a part of them, for the purpose of procuring for every family domestic animals and instruments of husbandry. The idea here suggested is interesting to humanity: it is peculiarly interesting to the United States. Even in a pecuniary view, it is important. A single campaign would cost more than the entire establishment of these schools of humanity among all the Indian nations within their limits.

“The British, I am informed, expend many thousands annually in presents to the Indians of the Six Nations. But the charity (if such it can be called) is as ill-placed as it is ill-conducted. In its consequences, it is highly injurious to the Indians themselves; for, in proportion to the largeness of the presents usually received, their industry will naturally be abated. The object of the plan here sketched is to furnish the Indians with the means, and to produce a disposition to support themselves in a condition of all the most eligible for the mass of the nation,—the condition of husbandmen. To me the plan appears not difficult to execute. And if it would be the surest and the cheapest method of preserving the friendship of the Indians (as I conceive it would), it may merit public attention. Its expediency struck me so forcibly, I could not forbear submitting it to your inspection.

“I have the honor to be, with very great respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

“T. PICKERING.

“THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.”

“PHILADELPHIA, January 15th, 1791.

“SIR,

“I intended to have done myself the honor of waiting on you in person; but a letter may give you less trouble.

“General Knox informed me that it would be agreeable to you that I should undertake the superintendency of the

northern Indians,—I mean particularly the Six Nations; and that you desired him to mention it to me. I answered that, by the new Constitution of Pennsylvania, a Continental appointment was declared to be incompatible with the appointments I held under the State; and I supposed the nature of such superintendency would not warrant any considerable emolument. In a subsequent conversation I intimated a willingness to perform the necessary services respecting the Six Nations, without any formal appointment; but this idea seemed not to have been approved. Afterwards I found that all the Indians north of the Ohio were already arranged under one department, of which General St. Clair was the Superintendent, who, with your permission, might appoint a deputy. General Knox seemed to wish that the matter might be suspended until the arrival of General St. Clair, who was daily expected. Since that time I have reflected on the subject; and, upon the whole, would beg leave to decline taking the superintendency proposed. Though not without expressing the real pleasure I feel in the favorable sentiments you entertain concerning me; and assuring you of my readiness to render any occasional services in that line which your wishes for the public good may require.

“Permit me, Sir, to add a few words relative to the subject of the last letter I had the honor to write to you. Before I wrote, two circumstances made me hesitate. One, lest it should be thought that I, like many projectors, was contriving an employment for myself; the other, lest if such a plan should be approved and established, I should in fact be requested to undertake the execution of it; to which request, sentiments of humanity and regard to the public good might urge me to yield; while other views, and the feelings of my family, might be strongly opposed to it. My opinion, however, of the utility, as well as of the practicability of the plan proposed for introducing the art of husbandry and civilization among the Indians, remains the same. It was an opinion not hastily formed. But lest a partiality for a project of my own should mislead my judgment, I submitted it to the examination of two or three gentlemen of discernment; and it received their

approbation before I would venture to give you the trouble of reading a long letter about it.

"Although, Sir, I have declined the proposed permanent agency in Indian affairs, I have not withdrawn my views from public life, but should cheerfully engage in it when an opening for useful employment, more beneficial than the offices I hold under this State, shall present. Two of these offices are now rendered certain, by recent appointments somewhat unexpectedly made. But they are all of too little value for me to depend on during the rest of my life. Whenever, therefore, any suitable employment shall offer, I shall feel myself peculiarly obliged by your remembrance of me.

"With the most sincere respect, I am, Sir, your obedient, humble servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES."

"PHILADELPHIA, January 20th, 1791."

"SIR,

"I have had the pleasure to receive your letters of the 8th and 15th of this month. I feel myself much obliged by the trouble you have taken, in the former, to detail your ideas with respect to introducing the art of husbandry and civilization among the Indians. I confess that your plan, or something like it, strikes me as the most probable means of accomplishing this desirable end, and I am fully of opinion with you, that the mode of education which has hitherto been pursued with respect to those young Indians who have been sent to our colleges, is not such as can be productive of any good to their nations: reason might have shown it, and experience clearly proves it to have been the case. It is, perhaps, productive of evil. Humanity and good policy must make it the wish of every good citizen of the United States that husbandry, and consequently civilization, should be introduced among the Indians. So strongly am I impressed with the beneficial effects which our country would receive from such a thing, that I shall always take a singular pleasure in promoting, as far as may be in my power, every measure which may tend to ensure it.

I should have been very glad if it had comported with

your interest and inclination to superintend the northern Indians, as I am persuaded that nothing would have been wanting on your part to attach them to the United States, and to cultivate that disposition for civilization which now begins to dawn among them. Whoever undertakes this business must be actuated by more enlarged views than his private interest, or he can never accomplish the wished-for end.

“With very great regard and esteem, I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

“G. WASHINGTON.

“COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

Colonel Pickering's conference with the Indians at Tioga Point was the beginning of a public service in this department of much importance. He was singularly adapted to it. There were many particulars in his aspect, deportment, and character that gave him great influence over Indians, and won their confidence and good-will. His lofty stature, six feet; his broad athletic frame, and powerful muscular development; the strength that marked every movement; his tread and gestures; a certain manliness in his general bearing; his physical hardihood: and the energy, courage, and firmness stamped on his face, words, and actions, — were just what they admired. There was, as all who knew him will remember, one point in which he possessed what it is the greatest pride of an Indian to exhibit. Although he was naturally demonstrative, and in conversation or debate all alive, giving the fullest expression to his feelings, when in silence his face was accustomed to subside into an immovable and impassive composure which nothing could break. No external novelty, excitement, or peril; no bodily discomfort or pain; and no depth or force of

internal passion or sentiment, — could disturb the resolute repose of his features. The Indians saw that he had achieved the last attainment of a great warrior ; and that, undazzled and undaunted, no indication of surprise or weakness or concern could be traced on his imperturbable countenance. The Wyoming ruffians, who had him chained in the woods, also saw this. It disarmed them of all evil purpose, and compelled their respect.

The good-will and confidence of the Indians toward him were signalized by the highest compliment they could pay to any white man. They made him, as it were, an honorary chief, by giving him an Indian title, such as they bestowed upon their leading sachems and warriors. It was “Conni-sauti,” meaning the “sunny side of a hill.” In the interchange of formal speeches at conferences around the council fire, they addressed him as “Brother Conni-sauti.”

Before further describing Colonel Pickering's discharge of the duties of the high public trusts and stations to which he was called by Washington and Adams, it may be well, at this point, to relate matters of family and domestic interest and affection, by extracts from his correspondence.

On the 23d of December, two days after his arrival at Philadelphia to make report of the conference at Tioga Point, writing to his brother,* he says :—

“Here I have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Wingate (I am now at his lodgings), whom I have not seen in fourteen years.

* Mr. Wingate, his brother-in-law, was, it will be remembered, a Senator in Congress from New Hampshire. Benjamin Goodhue, of Salem, was a member of the House from Massachusetts.

Mr. Goodhue lodges at the same house. Mr. Wingate gives me a flattering account of my son John. I wish he could be persuaded to write to me; but perhaps he has almost forgotten me; or ceases to remember me with affection. His brother Tim, would be very much gratified by a letter from him. His other brothers scarcely recollect, or never knew him. We think they are all fine boys, whom our eastern friends would see with pleasure."

Chief-Justice Sargeant was one of Colonel Pickering's most agreeable and valued correspondents. His letters are inspired with fraternal love, natural, racy, and enlivened by a peculiar wit and humor. The Colonel combined the utmost strictness of the Puritan, with the most refined deference of the Chevalier, in the society of the sex. All who think of the propriety of his manners, and the purity of his morals in all respects, especially in this, cannot but feel how extremely laughable is Sargeant's allusion to the "pretty Genesee squaws."

"HAVERHILL, December 6th, 1790.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"Fearing lest I was forgotten, I have embraced this opportunity to put you in mind that you have a brother and sister living in Haverhill. We both rejoice when we meet with a letter from you at Salem, informing of the health of yourself and your family,—family of seven sons. What a goodly sight! Your sister thinks of scarcely a greater happiness, than to see yourself, wife, and seven sons at once; though we have but little reason to expect that happiness, it would give us great pleasure if we could hear about them by a letter directly to us. Though, perhaps, we have been too negligent in writing, yet we have done our duty in making inquiry, for I believe we have missed no opportunity of doing that. Your old friend Nelson refreshed us with his account of you. We rejoiced when we heard of your appointment as Plenipo

among the Genesee Nations ; pray let us have an account of that campaign, — how you did, fared, and what success ; whether you kissed any pretty squaws, &c., as before.

“ We have lately been at Salem, and found all your and our friends there in good health and spirits. Your son, I think, is a promising youth. His mechanical genius will not disgrace his family, and I believe, in other respects, his genius is very good. Your sister Sargeant is a thorough disciple of Mr. Shandy ; and she thinks you have been very faulty in not informing your son, or some of your relations at Salem, of the *Christian name* of your youngest son, Christian names being of very great importance to the poor little child, through the whole course of its life ; but she consoles herself with the thought that your judgment in that matter also is very good. I must speak one word for myself. I would gladly oblige you, in turn, by giving you an account of the disposition of our people and the state of our government, but am sensible you have fuller and better accounts of both from your numerous acquaintance than I am able to give. I am very desirous to know of the state of population, the cultivation of the land, and the dispositions of the people towards government among you, and whether you enjoy the good opinion of the people as much as I know you deserve it : should be very happy to be resolved as to those matters, partly because I know if they could be resolved as I could wish, you would enjoy a good degree of happiness. We all enjoy good health except myself. The influenza last year fell on poor me, as well as everybody else ; and left upon me a very troublesome asthmatic disorder, which it is very doubtful if I ever get rid of. I find my flesh wears away slowly, but I always had some to spare. What will be the end of it, He that has a right to dispose of me, only knows. Hoping we shall soon hear of your health and welfare, and presenting our most respectful love and regards to yourself, sister, and family, subscribe

“ Your most affectionate brother and sister,

NATHANIEL PEASLEE and MARY SARGEANT.”

This letter did not reach Colonel Pickering until February 20th, 1791. His answer gives a full account of his family at that time.

“DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,

“I received but a few days ago your favor of December, and have now scarcely time to acknowledge it, as the bearer is just ready to start.

“I was pleased that you should concur with me, in thinking a circle of *seven sons* ‘a goodly sight.’ When my wife sometimes groans under the burthen, I tell her that if I could support them, I should be doubly pleased with twice that number. But what, more than all, makes me happy, is that they all discover understandings and dispositions which may procure honor to themselves, and enable them to be useful members of society; or, if there be a failure, it is in the capacity of our third son, Henry, which is evidently inferior to any of his brothers; yet by no means contemptible. Indeed one family of our friends, with whom he lived some months in Philadelphia, thought him an extraordinary boy, and to this day speak of him with great pleasure. Tim is a smart boy, and a resolute one. Nobody will ever use him ill with impunity. John used to be timid. Tim was never so disposed to study as John; but had a greater aptness to acquire a knowledge of numbers, notwithstanding the disparity of years; that aptness and fondness for numbers still continues. I have only to regret that, at his age, he has not the advantage of a good school; and the crowd of business pressing upon me has prevented my exercising the pleasing task myself. Tim says he will be a farmer. He is intelligent, and will make a useful man in whatever he engages. Charles, our fourth son, is a fine boy; his black sparkling eyes early announced a bright understanding. I shall be greatly disappointed if he does not shine in a learned profession, if it please God to spare my life and his, and enable me to give him a suitable education. William is now five years old, and yesterday had a little pains taken with him to teach him the alphabet, which he nearly learned, for which I gave him a new primer; and to-day, if he completes his knowledge of

it, he is to have a great apple (which is as great a rarity here as an orange is with you). William is disposed to be waggish ; is not deficient in understanding, but I cannot yet tell what he will make. Edward was three years old last September, a stout fellow, as heavy or heavier than William, and nearly as tall ; and his mind has kept pace with his body. He is a bold, manly fellow, and often surprises us with expressions which we should hardly expect from a child much older than he. He is fair skinned, his hair reddish, and has large features. If sister Clark were to see him, she would say of him, as she once said of me, ‘ well, brother Tim, you are *despert* homely.” But everybody loves him.

“ George (for that is the name of our seventh son) is as small as Edward is large. He was a year old last August. His complexion is just like Edward’s, his eyes bluish, and his features small and regular ; and we call him ‘ mamma’s pretty boy.’ He is more forward than were any of his brothers, and his actions indicate a good understanding, with a *quantum sufficit* of *spirit*.

“ How pleasant to a father to descant on such sons ! Your own remark, ‘ what a goodly sight,’ set my pen a running ; and here I have almost got to the end of my paper, with what is little different from egotisms. But you also intimated the great pleasure a sight of them would give you ; and the description now given, in some sort, presents them to your view. The detail will give you as much pleasure as a long account of my Indian conference, on which I can only say, that I was highly gratified, that I entertain a better opinion of our tawny neighbors than I used to do ; and that I firmly believe most of their revengeful hostilities are occasioned by the robberies, murders, and encroachments, and other abuses they receive from our frontier *white* savages ; for, really, *their* dispositions appear to me more fierce and revengeful than those of the Indians with whom I treated. I must bid you farewell, with only presenting, with my own, the affectionate regards of my wife. I lament your indisposition, and pray God your health may be restored.

“TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

Judge Sargeant died in October of that year.

These letters, besides the pleasing family affections and pictures they present, are particularly interesting as illustrating the fallibility of early prognostications as to the future development of the faculties and character of the young. It was supposed that John Pickering, then thirteen years of age, would distinguish himself in life, and reflect honor upon his family by his "*mechanical* genius!" And the father thought that Henry, a lad between nine and ten years, was "inferior" to all the brothers in his "capacity." He became, in fact, a most accomplished man; his mind enriched by classic culture and taste, expressing itself in pure and elegant poetry, and appreciating, as few others did, the beauties of art in its kindred branches. In commercial and business pursuits he was efficient and enterprising, exhibiting a broad and generous cast of mind and character. Admired in private circles, he filled a sphere of usefulness and beneficence, towards his family and parents, never surpassed by son or brother.

The truth is, that the poor boy, in his earlier residence in Philadelphia, child as he was, had acquired a love of city life. His faculties pined in the woods and solitudes of Wyoming. What the flower needed was transplantation.

In some instances surrounding circumstances give, even in the earliest years, a lasting bent to the mind: in others, no particular tendencies come into play until more maturity is reached. Some faculties and tastes, are of slow growth, germinate late, but in the end overshadow others, which at first had the start. The whole mental character has been seen to undergo a

change, particularly in the earlier decades of life. What aspects it may finally present, depends upon the contingencies of an unknown future, and cannot, therefore, be surely foreseen or safely predicted.

“WAR DEPARTMENT, February 25th, 1791.

“SIR,

“It is in contemplation to make a vigorous campaign against the Indians north-west of the Ohio; although the measures for this object are not finally decided upon, yet it appears that only the legislative forms are wanting.

“The Quartermaster’s business on the frontiers has hitherto been conducted under the contractors; but it is conceived not to be so economical as to appoint a Quartermaster for the department, accordingly provision is made in the bill for a Quartermaster, with the pay, rations, and forage of a Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant, but without any rank. An estimate of the amount is annexed.

“It is the desire of the President of the United States, that the offer of this appointment should, in confidence, be made to you. If you should think proper to accept, the nomination will be made accordingly.

“In this case it would be necessary that you should repair here immediately, as the most vigorous preparations would be necessary.

“I wish, Sir, that you may accept this offer, and that it was, in a pecuniary point of view, more worthy of your acceptance. All necessary assistance would be afforded in the execution of the business, and such advances of money would be made, as that nothing should languish on that account.

“I am, Sir, with great esteem and respect, your very humble servant,

“H. KNOX, *Secretary of War.*

“COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING.

“An estimate of the pay and emoluments of a Lieutenant Colonel Commandant.

Pay, at 60 dollars, per month	720
6 rations per day at $\frac{10}{100}$ dollars per ration	216
Forage, at 12 dollars per month	144
	\$1080”

"PHILADELPHIA, February 25th, 1791.

"DEAR SIR,

"I was sent for this day to give an opinion, whether you would accept the appointment, which the letter, herewith presented, tenders to you. I had my doubts, yet I encouraged the sending to you for your own determination.

"The employment, though arduous and not profitable, may lead to something better. Indeed, the terms held out to you in the estimate annexed to your letter, *I am authorized to say*, will not be considered a full allowance, provided *you* accept. For *another*, it will be in full.

"I cannot add, for the express is waiting, and he must be here again on Wednesday next. The President of the United States sets off for home, and a southern tour on Sunday or Monday at farthest.

"Affectionately yours,

"SAMUEL HODGDON.

"COLONEL PICKERING."

"WILKESBARRE, February 28th, 1791.

"SIR,

"The express arrived this evening with your letter of the 25th instant. I beg you to communicate to the President my sincere thanks for his attention to me in the proposition which, at his desire, you have made to me. I am disposed to believe the President's motives are honorable to me, as well as friendly; and it gives me much pain to decline a service in which he has thought I should be useful. If I consulted only my own feelings, I should little hesitate to accept of the offer, at the same time that I should consider the pecuniary compensation as inadequate; though it is probably equal to the object of the office.

"But I am not in a situation to make sacrifices to the public. My little farm and my State offices, with industry and economy, I expect will yield a frugal maintenance to my numerous family. The acceptance of the proposed appointment for a single campaign (and I have no idea that it can be longer necessary) would oust me of those offices, and, in my absence, my farm would turn to small account. I am aware of personal advantages that may result from the appointment, and that it might be highly conducive to my future interest;

but I am not in a situation to hazard the little I now enjoy, for great, but remote and contingent, benefits.

"I cannot conclude, Sir, without an acknowledgment of the polite and friendly manner in which you have made known to me the President's request.

"With great respect and esteem I am, Sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"HONORABLE H. KNOX, Secretary of War.

It seems that, while the circumstances attending the proffer of this office were agreeable, Colonel Pickering did not hesitate to decline it. His views on the subject were more fully expressed in a letter written the same evening to Major Hodgdon.

"WILKESBARRE, February 28th, 1791.

"Just before night, Mr. Fisher handed me your letter of the 25th instant.

"I foresee some advantages, and can discern remoter valuable prospects, which my acceptance of the proposed office would hold up to my view; and were I a single man, or had a very small family, which a small salary would decently support, I should not much hesitate to engage in it. But, circumstanced as I am, I must decline it; though it gives me pain to refuse what the President, with a confidence so flattering to me, has desired might be proposed. So much for private considerations.

"From the interest I take in whatever concerns the public welfare, I feel a desire to engage in the business. Economical views have suggested the establishment of the office, and, perhaps in part, dictated the proposal to me. But I have higher views (perhaps vain ones) which on this subject interest my feelings. Although the measures and events of the last campaign appear to render a powerful armament, at this time, indispensable, yet, while I carried the sword in one hand, I should wish to hold the olive-branch in the other. It is true that my knowledge of Indians is confined to the northern tribes, and the result of small experience; yet, really, I con-

ceive it possible to make peace with the western nations, without the loss of much more blood. I conceive it possible to convince them of the superior power of the United States, and of the fruitlessness and destructive consequences of their opposition.

“If I mistake not, I have heard the Indians against whom Harmar’s expedition was formed represented as a banditti; the refuse of divers nations, thieves, robbers, murderers. I cannot but doubt the justness of these appellations. They are the very names formerly given by the Pennsylvania land-jobbers to the Connecticut settlers at Wyoming. And I am much disposed to believe that they are the land-jobbers of the western world who have caused the like descriptions to be applied to the western Indians. But do such opprobrious gangs as the description designates, cultivate extensive fields of corn and fruits? Do they build numerous and large villages? Do they take pains to search out judicious and delightful situations on which to erect them? No. Such works are the result of a degree of order and industry; and indicate expectations of permanent enjoyment, far surpassing the views of a banditti. In a word, I believe the Indians, inhabiting the towns destroyed by Harmar, to be not very unlike the Indian tribes with which I have some acquaintance; that they feel sore of the many injuries they have received of the white people, and that, in their mode, they have been taking revenge; but that it is practicable to convince them, that it is their interest to live in friendship with the United States; and convinced of this, they would cease their hostilities, when the frontier white people should cease to provoke them. But a truce to animadversions.

“T. PICKERING.”

On the 10th of April, 1791, Major Hodgdon was requested to call at the War Office, for the purpose of obtaining his opinion, whether Colonel Pickering could be persuaded to undertake another mission to the Indians. “The business being explained to me,” he writes to Pickering, “I hesitated not to declare that you would

undertake the business proposed. This will bring you to the city, and to my house of course. I know it will call you from your agricultural pursuits at an unfavorable season ; but Sir, in my opinion, the object in view will warrant your doing it. I consult your interest. You must determine finally."

Shortly after receiving this letter, he went to Philadelphia, and, upon concluding an engagement with the Secretary of War, wrote to his brother:—

"PHILADELPHIA, April 23d, 1791.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"An unexpected call to this city, to prepare for holding another treaty with the Indians of the Six Nations, gives me the pleasure of this opportunity of writing by Mr. Dalton.

"I am, from time to time, informed of your tolerable health, by Mr. Williams's letters, which affords me the truest pleasure. Your affection and friendship demand my warm and repeated acknowledgments. The profits of the former treaty greatly assisted me ; and those of the present one, I hope, will nearly extricate me from pecuniary demands. To do this completely, however, I yet hold up some of my new lands for sale. If I succeed, I shall not only pay off the small arrears to others, but all your loans.

"I have felt much concern for the education of my children, who have suffered since my removal to Wyoming. At present they are provided for by an ingenious young lawyer, who formerly kept school, who now boards at my house, assists in my office, and who has undertaken the daily task of instructing the children in reading and writing, and Tim in geography. My son John, I am informed, is a good scholar ; and now, I suppose, is fit for entering a college. I have had no communications with you on this subject, nor do I know your kind intentions concerning him. I earnestly wish you to write me. He is yet young enough. Fifteen, I think, is early enough for a youth to make the best improvement of college advantages. What estimate do you put on John's talents ? Does he discover an inclination for one of the

learned professions ; or only to acquire, at present, knowledge in general ?

“ I wish John could be persuaded to write ; if not to me, at least to his brother Tim, who, under all his disadvantages, will surely return an answer.”

The gentleman spoken of as the teacher of the children in the family has been frequently mentioned. Ebenezer Bowman was a graduate of Harvard College, Class of 1782. After teaching school at Cambridge, he left Massachusetts and settled at Wyoming. As has been stated, when Colonel Pickering opened the first court in Luzerne County, Mr. Bowman with William Nichols, Roswell Wells, and one other, were admitted to the bar. They were the only lawyers in the county for several years. In 1794 he retired from practice, but continued in active business. He represented Luzerne in the Pennsylvania House of Assembly in 1793. For a long period he boarded in Colonel Pickering's family, and was a faithful and zealous friend. They died in the same year, 1829.

The foregoing letter shows the condition of Colonel Pickering, as to pecuniary affairs, at the time. He was in debt to his brother, and, to some extent, to others ; and under the necessity of practising the greatest frugality. He had not the means of educating his children beyond the elements of primary instruction, provided by boarding a teacher in his family. His new lands, in the far west, and to which he clung as the only future support of his family, could not, even in part, be then sold ; for the improved public credit, created by Hamilton's funding system, had turned the floating capital of the country to the national stocks, and none was left for investment in lands.

It was owing to these circumstances that he felt under the necessity of obtaining some public employment. In seeking office, he had to assume a character most repugnant to his nature. Every instance of the kind has been presented. He never resorted to intrigue or indirect influence. He never asked the aid or intervention of others by way of petition or memorial ; but always made application, in his own name alone, and directly to the appointing power, in plain, frank, and manly terms. His *last* appearance as an office-seeker is the following letter to Washington: —

“ PHILADELPHIA, May 2d, 1791.

“ SIR,

“ Of the measures pursuing by General Knox, relative to Indian affairs, he doubtless makes to you the necessary communications. In those communications he may, perhaps, have mentioned my being here, preparatory to my undertaking another mission to the Indians of the Six Nations, for the purpose of confirming the peace and friendship subsisting between them and the United States, and as a means of preventing their being seduced to engage with the western Indians in the war against us.

“ Upon my arrival I heard of the vacancy of the office of Comptroller of the Treasury, and also learned that there were divers applicants who wished to succeed to it. For my own part, as I had already made known to you my desire of obtaining a permanent office in the general government, I had concluded not to trouble you with a fresh application at this time. But, upon further reflection, it seemed proper to address you. Because, among many applications pointing to the particular office of Comptroller, a former general application might not come into view ; because, if there be any office in the Treasury Department to which I am competent, I conceive it to be this ; and because, being now at the seat of government, not to apply might be construed as a relinquishment of all pretensions to it.

“ A general knowledge of public business, a reasonable

share of discernment, industry, cool deliberation, integrity, and strict impartiality, are the great requisites of the office. Whether, Sir, I have or have not just pretensions to any or all of those qualities, you, who have long known me, can accurately determine. To you alone, therefore, I make my suit; without asking the patronage or recommendation of any man. Such aid cannot be necessary, nor proper, nor decent: for no patronage, no recommendation, could make you *better acquainted with my character*; and that is the only ground on which a recommendation could pertinently be offered. For mere patronage will never determine appointments to office while you preside in the government of the United States.

"I have the honor to be, with the truest respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES."

One of the most remarkable things in Colonel Pickering's character was his devotion to the study and interests of agriculture. No private business or public employment could exclude it from his thoughts or divert his attention from it. While in the hurry and crowd of preparatory arrangements for his Indian mission, and within a day or two of writing the above letter to Washington, he sat down and filled a letter of four pages to his brother, exclusively on the cultivation of pease.

He fully appreciated the predominant importance of agriculture as the basis of the wealth and happiness of every nation. He worked upon his farm with a constant eye upon discoveries that might be made of the best methods of tilling land and rendering its products valuable. Wherever he went his observations had this direction. He read all he could find in print on the subject. It occupied a large space in his voluminous correspondence, and was a topic of conversation with persons of all conditions who had practical experience relating to it.

His knowledge and judgment as an agriculturist were recognized by all. Alexander Hamilton, in taking charge of the Treasury Department, at the opening of the Federal government, in his wise and broad statesmanship, saw the importance of arriving at a just estimate of the resources of the whole country, upon which to establish a sound and solid financial policy. On the subject of the value of the land, as an element of national wealth, he sought instruction from Colonel Pickering. In a letter to him of August 13th, 1791, he says:—

“Some investigations in which I am engaged induce a wish to be able to form as accurate an idea as can be obtained of the usual product, in proportion to the value of cultivated lands, in different parts of the United States.

“As I am persuaded no person can better assist me in this object than yourself, I take the liberty to ask the favor of your assistance.

“It has occurred to me that if the *actual* product on cultivated farms, of *middling* quality, could be ascertained with tolerable precision, it might afford as good a rule by which to judge as the nature of the thing admits of.”

After explaining at some length the sort of information of which he was in pursuit, Hamilton says:—

“In a matter with which I am not very familiar, it is possible I may have omitted circumstances of importance to the object of my inquiry. The supplying of such omissions will be particularly acceptable. As whatever comes from the Treasury is apt to be suspected of having reference to some scheme of taxation, it is my wish that the knowledge of this request may be confined to yourself.”

The enlightened views of the Secretary of the Treasury, on the subject of political economy, enabled him to see how important was the information of which he was in

pursuit, as to the value of agricultural products throughout the country, as the foundation of a solid system of national finance. If, however, he had been more "familiar" with the agricultural districts and population, it would have been apparent to him that the materials from which reliable and definite deductions could be made were not then in reach. But little statistical information had been collected, and the most intelligent farmers had extended their observations and inquiries over very limited local spheres.

It was not until two months had passed that Colonel Pickering's engagements gave him an opportunity to attend to the subject. His reply to Colonel Hamilton's letter is here given. It will be interesting to those competent to appreciate the progress that has since been made in multiplying, measuring, and appraising the products of the soil.

"PHILADELPHIA, October 13th, 1791.

"DEAR SIR,

"When I received your letter of the 13th of August, I did not consider it with that attention which would have been necessary if at that time I had attempted to answer the questions you propose. Now it appears to me impossible to do it with any degree of precision. It then struck me that certain communications to the Society of Agriculture, of this city, would have furnished the principal documents required on the subject at large. But upon a review of them (after a lapse of several years) I find I was mistaken.

"In my late absence from the city I meant to have made inquiries in the counties through which I travelled in this State; but here also I was disappointed, not meeting with any farmers sufficiently informed.

"From the farms in my neighborhood (from which you naturally expected me to collect accurate information) no conclusions can be drawn; their peculiar situation, in respect to title, and their quality rendering them exceptions to

most of the farms in the United States. Their title, being in suspense between the claimants under Connecticut and Pennsylvania, prevents their due cultivation and improvement; and the parts under cultivation are almost exclusively the bottom (or interval) lands, adjacent to the River Susquehanna and its branches. The residue of the country is without enclosures, where the cattle range at large, and where, till within four years past, the people cut wood for timber and fuel at discretion, without regarding their own lines of property. This singular state of the Wyoming farms precludes the idea of fixing their value. Their contents, generally, are three hundred acres, of which, upon an average, not thirty acres are reclaimed from a state of nature. The average produce of their cultivated grounds I estimate as follows:—

Wheat	15 bushels per acre.	} Without manure.
Rye	12 " " "	
Oats	25 " " "	
Buckwheat	15 " " "	
Indian-corn	25 " " "	
Hay	1½ ton " "	

“ Mr. Bordley, of Maryland (in a pamphlet, published in 1784), remarks that Mr. Young, the English travelling farmer, has ascertained that two hundred and eighty-nine acres are the average size of farms in England; of which one hundred and forty are in grass, and the remaining one hundred and forty-nine are called arable; although only one hundred and twelve give crops, the residue, thirty-seven acres, contains the building, orchard, &c. Mr. Bordley estimates the average size of Maryland farms at from two hundred and forty to two hundred and fifty acres, exclusive of woods, and their average produce at six bushels of wheat and twelve of Indian-corn per acre.

“ An intelligent Jersey farmer (in a communication to the Agricultural Society) rated the average produce of wheat in that State to be under six bushels.

“ Doctor Tilton thus states the produce of lands in the Delaware State: ‘ An acre of ground will produce of Timothy from one to two tons of dry forage; of red clover, from two

to three tons ; of Indian-corn, from fifteen to fifty bushels ; of wheat, from six to twenty bushels ; of barley and rye, from ten to thirty-five bushels ; of oats and buckwheat, from fifteen to thirty bushels ; of Irish potatoes, from one hundred to three hundred bushels.'

" If the Doctor meant that the mean quantities should be considered as the average produce, the lands in the Delaware State must be more fertile or better cultivated than the lands of any of the old States in the Union.

" I have made a few inquiries relative to the sizes of farms ; and their divisions into meadow, pasture, arable, and wood-land in this State and Connecticut ; but the answers were not satisfactory, and as your application to me respected only lands in ' my quarter,' it may be useless to state them.

" As it is thus in my power to give you only such very imperfect information, relative to the subject of your investigation, I hope you may have taken measures to obtain from others what will answer your design. I think, however, it will be impossible to ascertain the requisite facts with precision ; for I doubt whether one American farmer in a thousand has determined, by actual measurement, the sizes of his fields and their produce.

" I am, Sir, &c.,

" TIMOTHY PICKERING.

" A. HAMILTON, Esq., Secretary of the Treasury."

Early in June, Colonel Pickering left home to meet the Indians. He will relate his experience in passages of letters to his wife.

" TIOGA POINT, Tuesday morning, June 14th, 1791.

" I arrived here this morning in perfect health. The waters of the Tioga River are so low that the provisions and stores can be got up no farther than Newtown Point, about twenty miles from this place ; where, of course, the treaty will be held. There are many inhabitants in that neighborhood, so that *living* will be more agreeable than at the Painted Post. I purpose, however, to visit the latter place, and shall probably go as far as Colonel Lindley's, setting out this afternoon

in company with Mr. Ford. From what I have heard, there will be a numerous assemblage of Indians.

“I wrote you from Solomon Avery’s at Tunkhannock.”

“ON THE TIOGA RIVER, five miles below the Painted Post,

“June 15th, 1791.

“I am now at Major McCormick’s, where I have just dined, and presently shall proceed to the Painted Post.

“I wrote you yesterday a long letter about farming affairs, which I hope will get safe to hand. I mentioned my expectation that the treaty would be held at Newtown Point, supposing the waters too low to get boats up to the Painted Post. But before I absolutely decide on this, I mean to see some of the Indian Chiefs, and, if I can make them satisfied to go to Newtown Point, I will hold the treaty there; otherwise, we must drag up the provisions and stores to the Painted Post, drawing the loaded canoes with oxen, where the water is too shallow.

“Reports indicate a large assembly of Indians, but reports are uncertain. I expect much more trouble to manage them, than I experienced last autumn; but the present objects are of much greater moment.

“I hear that General Chapin and Mr. Phelps will be at the treaty. There appears a prospect of many white spectators. I am pleased with this prospect, and hope to conduct the business with success.”

“NEWTOWN, June 17th, 1791, at Colonel Miller’s.

“I have heard that the Indians will be at the Painted Post in about two days; but I doubt it, as no runners have yet arrived. I mean to hold the treaty at Newtown Point (twenty miles above Tioga), if I can satisfy the Indians to come so far.”

“NEWTOWN POINT, June 27th, 1791.

“The treaty will, as before, be of tedious continuance. The Indians from the north-east are come in; but the Senecas and others in their country are yet behind, at the distance, probably, of fifty or sixty miles. I think they will not arrive, and be ready to begin business, till the latter end of this week; and the treaty may then last ten days.

“P. S. Tim arrived last Tuesday.” He is well, and often diverted with Indian manners.”

“NEWTOWN POINT, July 1st, 1791.

“As this will be carried by Mr. Bowman, I need not be particular in my account of things at this place. The main body of the Indians are arrived ; but they will choose to wait for some behind. The numbers present from all the Six Nations now amount to about nine hundred. I expect they will, in the end, make up one thousand. From present appearances, we shall not enter on the real business of the treaty till next Monday ; and if the treaty breaks up in twelve days, it will be as soon as I expect.

“I remain in perfect health, and Tim is hearty. He went last evening to see the Indians dance.

“The Indians all appear to be well disposed, and were it not for their inordinate love of rum, they would be very easy to deal with ; at present they are troublesome by their perpetual importunities for rum.”

“NEWTOWN, July 5th, 1791.

“Yesterday we began the real business of the treaty ; and, from what at present appears, I suspect it will not be finished under ten days. We have now about nine hundred Indians on the ground, about a hundred and thirty more will be here to-day or to-morrow. They are all in good temper, and I expect the treaty will close in a very satisfactory manner. The bearer is Mr. Rutherford, a member of Congress, who is on his way home to New Jersey ; should he call with the letter himself, you will ask him to breakfast or to tea, if it happens to be convenient.”

“NEWTOWN POINT, Sunday, July 10, 1791.

“I have the pleasure to inform you that the Indians discover a very good disposition, and to place much confidence in me. The treaty, I expect, will conclude agreeably, in the course of the present week.

“There are upwards of a thousand Indians on the ground, of all ages, which, far exceeding the number I looked for, renders the feeding of them a little difficult ; because it is not easy to get grain ground for them. Of beef there is enough. Tim is desirous of buying some things for his brothers. He will probably bring home a silver brooch, and a pair of moccasins for each of them.”

Having accomplished the object of his mission, in concluding a treaty of vital importance at that crisis, by which the friendship to the United States of the Six Nations was confirmed and secured, Colonel Pickering returned to his family, and, after a few days, repaired to the seat of government to make report of his doings. On the 12th of August, 1791, he wrote to his wife, from Philadelphia, as follows : —

“ As I left you, these words dropped from your lips, ‘ I do not think we shall live here always,’— nor will you. This day the President appointed me Postmaster-General. Mr. Osgood has resigned. Next Monday or Tuesday I go to New York to see him, on the business of the department.

“ I pray God to preserve you and my dear family, that you may see *good* after so many *evil* days ; for, if the office should not add to my little fortune, at least I trust we shall live more comfortably, and get our children well educated.

“ Give my love to Betsey and the boys ; ask her if she is willing to trudge through the swamp with moccasins.

“ P. S. Salary of Postmaster-General, as fixed nine years ago, only fifteen hundred dollars. Expected to be materially raised.”

On the same day he wrote to his brother : —

“ Last Tuesday I arrived here to make a report to the President of the United States of my proceedings with the Indians of the Six Nations, at the treaty I lately held with them, having renewed and confirmed the peace between them and the United States.

“ This day the President sent me a note, desiring to see me. I waited on him ; and he made me a tender of the office of Postmaster-General, which I have accepted, and to-morrow expect to receive my commission.”

His commission was thus communicated to him by the Secretary of State : —

"PHILADELPHIA, August 14th, 1791.

"TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, Esq.,

"SIR,

"The President of the United States, desiring to avail the public of your services, as Postmaster-General of the United States, I have now the honor of enclosing you the commission, and of expressing to you the sentiments of perfect esteem, with which I am, Sir, &c.

"THOMAS JEFFERSON."

The troubles, cares, and trials to which his family had been exposed at Wyoming, undoubtedly made the prospect of a removal an inexpressible relief to them. The gentle but feeling words so prophetically uttered by Mrs. Pickering at their previous parting, and her sister's declaring that she would be willing to trudge through swamps in moccasins, show how they yearned to return from that solitude to a life more in accordance with all their former habits and associations. There was, indeed, a general gratification in Colonel Pickering's being brought back to a more conspicuous sphere of action.

Andrew Dunscomb of Richmond, at the head of the land office of Virginia, with whom Colonel Pickering had long been connected by public business, especially growing out of transactions as Quartermaster-General of the Revolutionary army, addressed him a letter of congratulation, which may serve as a specimen of communications of the kind from all quarters.

"RICHMOND, Virginia, August 25th, 1791.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have ever felt much pleasing satisfaction to result from an intelligence of any thing that contributed to your views, or the peace and wishes of your amiable family, and confess myself to have been alive to all the tender feelings of a friend,

whenever I read of your exposed situation. At the treaty I foreboded evil; but was happy when informed of your safe arrival in Philadelphia, and pleased that your conduct had received the marked approbation of the President of the United States, in an appointment to an office of dignity and consequence. I take the liberty of congratulating you on the occasion, and hope the appointment may be agreeable to you, and that it may accord with the wishes of your amiable lady and worthy family to return again to the city. It would give me much pleasure to see you all."

The reply to this letter breathes a like spirit of personal friendship:—

"I beg you to accept my thanks for your warm expressions of affection for me and my family. I left them in the country this day week. My wife was pretty well recovered, after bringing me an Octavius, our *eighth* son, now five weeks old. We have had no daughter. The boys are all alive, hearty and promising. By the first conveyance I shall communicate to her your very obliging letter. With real regard and esteem, I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

"TIMOTHY PICKERING."

There had been, indeed, a painful disappointment among Colonel Pickering's friends, and surprise was generally felt, that he was not recalled to the public service at the opening of the new national government. His intimate connection with Washington during the Revolutionary war; the high posts he had held; the great service he had rendered; his capacity for business, laborious fidelity, unsurpassed energy and executive ability in administering a most difficult department in the army,—were well known throughout the country. His incorruptible integrity was universally recognized. Great sympathy was felt in the hardships he had endured, and was enduring, at Wyoming. It could not fail to be noticed that, in the numerous appointments

announced from day to day, his name did not appear. No heed, moreover, was taken of strenuous applications made in his behalf, but without his knowledge, by men of the highest character and position, or of those which he presented himself.

The place now assigned him, viewed in connection with preceding and attending circumstances, explains it all. It is proper, however, to state that he himself never uttered any sentiment of complaint or dissatisfaction. Not a shade of such a feeling is traceable in his manuscripts, or was ever represented to have been indicated in his conversation. If the circumstance was ever noticed by him, he undoubtedly attributed it to the remoteness and obscurity in which, for the preceding years, his life had passed, — working on a farm, holding local offices in a frontier county, and hidden as it were in the woods.

But he had not been forgotten by his old Commander-in-Chief, or his associates of former years.

The objection that had been made, some time before, to his appointment to a State office, held against him in reference to an appointment in the general government. It was a question whether he was to be considered as belonging to Pennsylvania or Massachusetts. Paine Wingate, in a letter to him, of September 28th, 1787, speaks thus : —

“I am much mortified that it has not been in the power of your friends to bring you from your retirement into public life. I had flattered myself with the hope, that, in the long list of the late nominations, I should have found your name. I did not think it proper, in my connection with you personally, to solicit the President; but I know that, in conversation, you was mentioned by many, and most earnestly wished

for, to be placed in some department of the Treasury ; and the President could not be unacquainted with the idea. I know that it will be no great disappointment to you, nor do I suppose that your private interest will be affected, but your friends (and such you have many at Philadelphia, as well as at the eastward), have failed being gratified."

At the end of this letter is the following :—

"P. S. Since I wrote this letter I was told by one, who had it directly from Mr. Clymer, * that he and Mr. Fitzsimons, both mentioned you to the President, as a very suitable person for Comptroller. The President discovered an approbation of the opinion ; but observed that he thought it expedient to disperse the officers among the several States, and he did not know whether the Pennsylvanians would consider you as one of them. Mr. Clymer replied that he was confident the most respectable citizens of that State would not only be satisfied with your appointment, but heartily wished it."

The President was in the right. It was of the highest importance, in the state of the country at that crisis, that, in organizing the Federal administration, all sections should be duly and fairly noticed. If Pickering had at that time been brought forward, a ground of cavil would have been afforded, as to whether he was to be regarded as a representative man of the Middle or of the New England States. This objection was, in itself, of real practical weight ; but, when connected with the fact that Knox, also a Massachusetts man, was made Secretary of War, it became decisive ; and no one could complain of that appointment.

Knox had been an officer of the highest rank in the Continental army, through the whole Revolutionary war, and had always done good and gallant service. But one

* George Clymer and Thomas Fitzsimons, both of Pennsylvania, were members of Congress.

service in particular had given him a hold upon Washington's mind and memory that could never be effaced. History has not sufficiently recorded it; but it is necessary to be related as in part explaining the attachment of these two patriots to each other.

Before the Revolution began, Knox had been engaged in enterprising business as a bookseller in Boston, where he was born in 1750. He was early interested in military matters, and, in the ranks and as an officer, had been an active member of two volunteer companies, one of which was the "Boston Grenadier Corps." He had married the daughter of the Secretary of the Province, one of the staunchest Tories of the day. Her family had great social, as well as political, position. He, nevertheless, was devoted to the Revolutionary movement, and his heart so deeply engaged that he could not remain inactive. He got out of Boston and made his way to the Colonial forces. He was put in charge of procuring a supply of cannon, for the army at Cambridge, from the Canadian frontier posts, and he executed the service; reappearing at head-quarters in Cambridge, followed by a long train of vehicles on runners, drawn by oxen, and delivered over more than fifty cannons, mortars, and howitzers, with their requisite appendages. No one can calculate the value of this acquisition. If it had not been for this, it is difficult to say how the siege of Boston could have proceeded, and the British been compelled to evacuate it. Washington fully appreciated the importance of the achievement, and the resolution, prowess, and courage with which it had been conducted, and it laid deep the foundations of the friendship he ever afterwards cherished.

This was the basis of the artillery department of the Revolutionary army, and Knox remained at the head of it to the end of the war. His post was always with the main body of the army, and near head-quarters. A close friendship grew up between him and the Commander-in-Chief, of which their families partook. Washington loved him for his large-heartedness, manly frankness, heroism, and all his personal and military qualities. It was natural, and all felt it to be so, to call him to the war department.

For Pickering Washington had another object in view, which, however, he seems never to have disclosed until he could put it into effect.

The first Congress met in the city of New York, and soon entered upon earnest, sometimes heated, and long-protracted debates, as to the proper place for, as they expressed it, "a Federal Seat." There was a general impression that it ought to be more central to the Union; and it was understood that it would, for this and other reasons, soon be removed from New York. Washington was known to be in favor of fixing it on the banks of the Potomac, where it now is. Some favored its being established on the Delaware, some on the Susquehanna, some at Germantown. It was concluded to have it removed to Philadelphia.

Samuel Osgood, a man of high character and abilities, was Postmaster-General, appointed by the old Congress, and in office when the new government was inaugurated. Although a native of Andover, and long a leading citizen of Massachusetts, he had removed his residence to New York city. Washington continued him in office. But it was understood that, upon the

removal of the seat of government from New York, his business would require him to resign it. In that event, which was quite sure soon to occur, all the circumstances show that Washington was, from the first, determined to appoint Colonel Pickering to the place. It was one for which he knew him to be especially adapted, and in which the country would experience, in the highest degree, the benefit of his ability, industry, and energy. For this reason he waived all propositions to have him appointed to other offices. There could be no objection on the ground that New England had already a member of the Cabinet in the Secretary of War, for the Postmaster-General was not then the head of a department, but of what was considered a branch of the Treasury. Sectional jealousy, which would perhaps have been excited if, in the original programme of the administration, two leading positions had been assigned to Massachusetts men, was not so much to be feared in filling a vacancy subsequently occurring.

It will be remembered with what an affectionate cordiality, so uncommon with him, Washington greeted and conferred with Colonel Pickering at their meeting on the 3d of September, 1790, when he requested him to undertake the first mission to the Six Nations. In August, 1791, when he returned from his second mission to those tribes, Mr. Osgood having resigned, Washington sent Pickering the note requesting an interview, and tendered him the office of Postmaster-General.

It can hardly be questioned that this had been his design all along. From the time when Colonel Pickering brought to him, in the Jerseys, his Essex Regiment, to the close of his Presidency, whenever Washington

needed an able, reliable, upright coadjutor, he knew where to find him. However annoying, occasionally, their extreme difference of habitual temperament might have been, their absolute confidence in each other's purity and patriotism was steadfast from the beginning to the end.

Upon receiving his commission, Colonel Pickering addressed the following letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania. In the earlier part of the Revolutionary war, relations of great friendship existed between him and General Mifflin, which, however, were interrupted by the connection of the latter with the party, among the officers of the army, not deemed friendly to Washington, particularly with what was known as the Conway Cabal. Out of these causes grew the alienation referred to in the letter. It is given at length, as it affords a summary of the value and operations of the offices Colonel Pickering had held in Luzerne, presents items of personal interest, is a contribution to the history of that county, and is an instance of Colonel Pickering's regard for its welfare, and of disinterested courtesy to one from whom, although once his friend, circumstances had somewhat severed him : —

“PHILADELPHIA, August 16th, 1791.

“SIR,

“It is proper for me to inform you that the President of the United States has been pleased to appoint me to the office of Postmaster-General. This, of course, vacates the offices which I held under Pennsylvania ; and, though I do not feel myself under any obligations to the county of Luzerne, yet I shall be pleased to see its welfare promoted. I shall be pleased to see that part of Pennsylvania prosper ; and I shall also be pleased, Sir, to see your administration approved and applauded.

“I am at all times indisposed to adulation. I hope, Sir, I am incapable of it. My present situation has removed all

the business had been dammed up during several years ; the law, introduced, opened the gates ; and, during three years, there was a run of from twenty to forty actions at a term. But the sources have failed, and the stream is greatly reduced. At the last term, the number of actions was about eighteen ; and when I left home, ten days ago, there stood on the docket but a solitary action for the ensuing term, commencing this day two weeks.

“ These facts I state from my memory (which, however, I believe is pretty correct), not expecting such occasion to use them ; for, till I reached Bethlehem, I knew not that any office under the United States was vacant.

“ Permit me now, Sir, to mention a gentleman there who can well execute, and who well deserves all those offices. I mean Abraham Bradley, Esquire, whose prudence, steadiness, and sobriety are exemplary, — whose integrity is unblemished, whose industry has no rival, and whose judgment and law knowledge have there no superior ; I should speak more accurately if I should say *no equal*. In pleadings and the necessary forms, he is decidedly superior to all. But he came later into the practice than the other attorneys, was younger, somewhat diffident, and has not formed a habit of speaking. He has therefore had few cases to manage, and his fees have been trifling. He studied law, and wrote in the office of Tapping Reeve, Esquire, an eminent lawyer at Litchfield, in Connecticut. He writes a fair, strong, legible hand, perfectly adapted to records. During my frequent absences in the last two years, he has done the business in the court and in my office with great propriety. 'Tis a business in which he takes pleasure. His law knowledge renders him peculiarly fit to hold all the offices before-mentioned, and will give great facility in the execution. And his law knowledge will not be stationary ; it will advance. For he has an inquisitive mind, and a taste for literature in general.

“ This, Sir, is not the language of hyperbole. ‘ I speak the words of truth and soberness,’ from an intimate personal acquaintance with Mr. Bradley. I think he was, last spring,

admitted an attorney in the Supreme Court; but Mr. Burd can inform you.*

"With great satisfaction, Sir, I have seen the respectable law appointments which you have made; and I have heard them spoken of in terms of high approbation. The same principle will lead you to select other officers for the department of law who have the best law knowledge. I need not mention that the Register's and Prothonotary's offices more especially require much law knowledge; and the more the incumbent possesses, with the more propriety and facility he will execute them. More than ever, law knowledge in the Prothonotary will now be useful and important, on account of the increased importance of the court under the new Constitution..

"Give me leave, Sir, to close this long letter with a few words relative to the county Judges. Mr. Joseph Kinney was pretty early appointed a Judge of the Common Pleas; but, fully expecting to remove to the State of New York, he sent to the court a letter of resignation; but I do not know whether his resignation was ever declared to the late Execu-

* The Washington "National Intelligencer," of Thursday, May 10th, 1838, has the following:—

"DEATH. In this city, on Monday night, Abraham Bradley, Esquire, one of our most venerable and respected fellow-citizens, and formerly, for a long series of years, honorably known as filling, with distinguished ability, the arduous trust of Assistant Postmaster-General.

"Abraham Bradley was born on the 22d of February, 1767. He read law in the office, and under the immediate direction, of the late Judge Reeve, of Litchfield, and settled at Wilkesbarre, in the Valley of Wyoming. He was soon appointed a Judge, and retained the office until just before he removed to Philadelphia. He entered the Post-office department when under the direction of Mr. Pickering, and was shortly afterwards, upon its first organization, appointed Assistant Postmaster-General, which office he retained till the month of September, 1829, when he was removed, without cause, by the executive, from an office in which he had rendered, and was rendering, invaluable services to his country. Since then he has lived in privacy, holding, for the last two years, the office of Secretary of the Franklin Insurance Company, in this city.

"The fidelity, ability, and unwearied industry with which he discharged his public duties were known to all. To his surviving children and friends it must be gratifying indeed to be able to look to the whole of his life as full of bright examples, and illustrated by the strictest integrity."

tive Council. I believe it was not. He lived near Tioga, where Esquire Hollenback was sometimes present, and to which neighborhood Esquire Murray moved up from Shawnee. Mr. Kinney was disappointed in respect to the lands in York State to which he meant to go, and has remained in Luzerne. Christopher Hurlbut, Esquire, is now a Justice of the Peace, and of the Court of Common Pleas for that county. These two gentlemen I name before all others who can have any pretensions to the office of Judge of the Common Pleas under the new Constitution; because they are decidedly men of superior discernment, of minds more improved and still improving; because they are inquisitive, have a taste for reading, and a thirst for knowledge. I do not know that the other Judges can be better chosen than from among the gentlemen who have held seats in the legislature and Executive Council, whom you personally know. The characters of the gentlemen I have described, I think, are drawn with truth. If I were never to see you again, if I were going to quit this country or world, I should freely write what I have here written.

“Should you honor me with any questions relative to the county of Luzerne, I shall answer them with pleasure, and with the same candor that I should have given you information at any period of my life.

“I have the honor to be respectfully, Sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

“T. PICKERING.

“THOMAS MIFFLIN, Esq., Governor
of Pennsylvania.”

Colonel Pickering delivered this letter to Governor Mifflin on the morning of August 17th, 1791.

This terminated his service under the government of Pennsylvania, in the county of Luzerne. It was his lot to be identified, as an actor and sufferer, with the last scenes of violence and contention, that, for thirty years, had crowded the troublous and tragic history of Wyoming. He was sent there to give rest and peace to that

long-distracted valley, and the work was now accomplished.

He encountered the lawless elements reigning there in his own person. Once driven by a maddened and yelling mob, a fugitive, into mountain forests; afterwards torn from his bed at midnight by ruffians, pinioned, hurried to the unknown depths of a wilderness, and kept there fettered for weeks at the mercy of his captors. But his indomitable firmness and courage subdued them. The passions that convulsed that people finally exploded in these outrages upon his person; all traces of them disappeared for ever; and law and order were permanently established. The debt of gratitude due to his memory by that State, especially by the inhabitants of the region on both sides of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, will be more deeply felt as history fulfils its office.

If Colonel Pickering's efforts to open roads had been duly seconded by the government, and if his appeals and remonstrances to the General Assembly had been heeded, and the titles to land seasonably and unalterably confirmed, his correspondence with William Bingham shows that an earlier generation would have witnessed and enjoyed the marvellous development of the mineral wealth of Pennsylvania.*

* Vols. Ivii. and Iviii. of Colonel Pickering's Manuscripts contain all the original papers connected with his labors in organizing the county of Luzerne, with his various and extraordinary experiences there, and his final success in securing the permanent peace and tranquillity of that region; and also many sources of valuable information as to the remarkable history of the Wyoming Valley, and the controversies and conflicts for its possession, summarily described in a previous chapter of this work.

